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J. ANDREWS & CO. LITHO. ASTON-MANUFACTURING CO.

ASHTON OLD HALL.









History  
or  
Ashton-under-Lyne  
And  
The Surrounding District.

COMPILED BY WILLIAM GLOVER.

EDITED BY JOHN ANDREW.



---

J. ANDREW AND CO., REPORTER OFFICE,  
ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE.

1884.





**W**HERE are the Heroes of the Ages past ?  
Where are brave Chieftains, where the mighty ones,  
Who flourish'd in the infancy of days ?  
All to the Grave gone down. On their fallen fame  
Exultant, mocking at the pride of Man,  
Sits grim Forgetfulness.

KIRKE WHITE.





# P R E F A C E .



OUR readers may desire to know something about the inception of this volume. Briefly stated the reason for its existence was a feeling very generally expressed that it was desirable to have all that had been written about the ancient Manor of Ashton-under-Lyne, and the surrounding neighbourhood re-produced in some permanent form. Our duties were undertaken in response to that desire, and were well and clearly defined from the beginning. Consequently all we lay claim to is the collection and compilation of such matters as were likely to be of value and interest to our readers.

At the commencement of our task it was distinctly understood that the continuance or withdrawal of the numbers would depend upon the amount of encouragement the scheme received. It was soon seen after we commenced that the work was not likely to prove a financial success, but instead of withdrawing the numbers immediately, it was decided to continue their issue—even though they should appear at irregular intervals—until the first volume was completed.

We desire to tender our thanks to several gentlemen who have aided us, some by the loan of valuable books, manuscripts and pictures, and others by supplying us with photographs of buildings about the town. We would especially mention D. F. Howorth, Esq.; Henry Hall, Esq.; J. H. Burton, Esq.; W. F. Burditt, Esq.; Messrs. J. O. Lupton, Junr., Joseph Williamson, J. Littlewood, Joseph Jessop, Librarian at the Mechanics' Institute, and W. Naylor, Librarian at the Ashton-under-Lyne Free Library.

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# The Parish of Ashton-under-Lyne.



## CHAPTER I.

Ashton-under-Lyne—Its Situation—Its Geological Formation—Its Coal Seams—Ashton Moss—A Shaking Bog—Experiments by the Lord of the Manor on the Moss—Its Mineral Waters—The Rivers Tame and Medlock—Its Climate—Its facilities for Manufacturing Purposes.



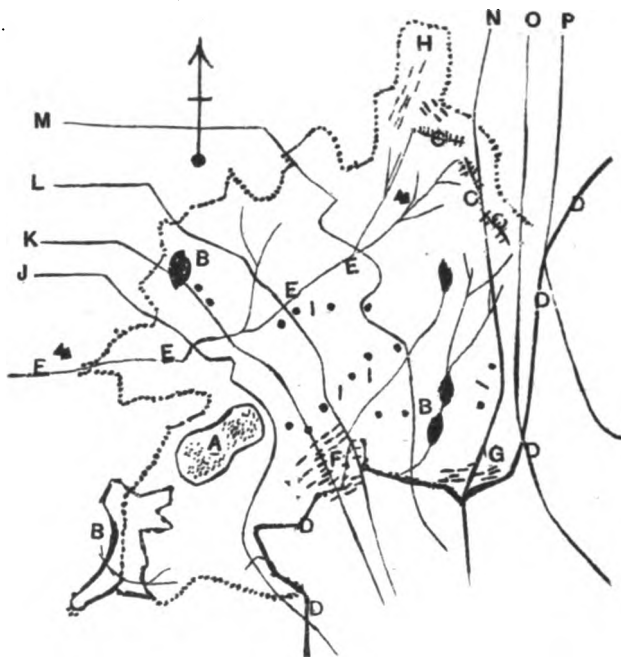
THE Parish of Ashton-under-Lyne is situated at the south-eastern extremity of the County Palatine of Lancaster; <sup>(1)</sup> in the Diocese of Manchester, in the Hundred <sup>(2)</sup> of Salford, and in the Representative Division of South-East Lancashire. It is bounded on the north by the Parish of Prestwich-cum-Oldham, on the south by the parish of Stockport, in the county of Chester, on the east by the parish of Mottram-in-Longdendale, and on the west by the parish

(1.) COUNTY PALATINE.—Comes Palatii was originally applied to officers of the royal household who possessed royal privileges. In the court of the ancient Kings of France, before the time of Charlemagne, there was a high judicial officer called *Comes Palatii*, a kind of master of the household, whose functions were nearly like those of the *Praefactus Praetorio* of the Roman empire. This officer had supreme judicial authority in all causes that came under the King's immediate audience. See Selden's *Titles of Honour*, part ii., ch. 33. The county of Lancaster appears to have been first made a county palatine by Edward III., who in the 25th year of his reign, in his patent of creation of Henry the First Duke, granted him the dignity of a count palatine, and afterwards, in the 50th year of his reign, granted the same dignity by letters patent to his son John, Duke of Lancaster. Aikin asserts that the patent for this purpose grants to the duke his court of chancery to be held within the county, his justices for holding the pleas of

of Manchester. It is in the north latitude  $53^{\circ} 25'$ , and west longitude  $2^{\circ} 8'$ , and comprises 9,496 statute acres.

EXPLANATION OF OUTLINE.

- A. Ashton Moss Land.
- B. Reservoirs.
- C. Hills.
- D. River Tame.
- E. River Medlock.
- F. Town of Ashton.
- G. Town of Stalybridge.
- H. Village of Lees.
- I. Coal Shafts.
- J. Bardsley Rock.
- K. Edge Fold Rock.
- L. Black Rod Rock.<sup>1</sup>
- M. Up-Holland Rock.
- N. Parbold Rock.
- O. Haslingden Rock.
- P. Mill Stone Grit Rock.



*Geological Sketch of the Parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, by C. Clay.*

The soil for the greatest part consists of a ferruginous clay and a strong, heavy loam, with an admixture of sand and gravel. In the investigations of the geology of the district by Charles Clay, we have the following account:—"By far the most important feature of this parish is, in a geological point of view, a vast coal deposit, to which may be attributed, in a great measure, the prosperity and affluence of the neighbourhood. In the northern portion of the parish a large peat formation is extended over 200 acres. The soil of the parish is generally stiff and unyielding. It is, therefore, not very productive, unless great attention is paid to its cultivation. In the high lands of the parish boulder stones are found, of almost every description, of the older series of rock,

the Crown, and all other pleas relating to common law, and finally, "all other liberties and royalties relating to a county palatine, as freely and fully as the Earl of Chester is known to enjoy them within the county of Chester." Henry IV. was Duke of Lancaster

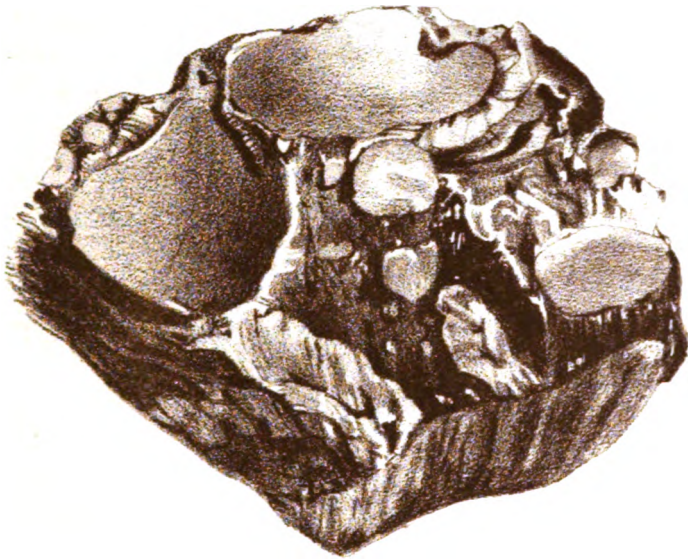
such as granite, porphyry, limestone, &c. Stratified rocks are numerous, and present a variety of appearances, from the Bardsley formation down to the higher millstone grit, with seams of coal between. The Bardsley rock is the first; its average thickness is about eighteen yards. The stone of the lower beds is very white, whilst that of the upper layers is marked with innumerable spots of fossil remains, which are chiefly the leaves and seeds of plants. In the alluvia above large quantities of hazel nuts have been preserved in a state approaching fossilisation. The next principal rock, the Edge fold, Huncliff, or Lump-rock, is in irregular masses, and whenever it crops out gives a peculiar rugged wildness to the scenery on the surface. This may be observed at the weir at Dukinfield, on the south border of the parish. This rock is rough, but durable, and averages twenty-one yards in thickness. Following the Edge-fold rock is the Black-rod or Oldham rock (with the exception of a ten-yard rock intervening): it averages twenty-seven yards in thickness, and is remarkably rich in fossil

by inheritance from his father, John of Gaunt, at the time of his usurpation. Henry V. annexed to this duchy the great estates which fell to him in right of his mother. Since that time the Duchy of Lancaster, comprehending, besides the county of Lancaster, other great estates, has subsisted as a separate possession belonging to the King or Queen of England, having its own chancellor and other officers. The Queen bears, as one of her titles, that of Duchess and Countess Palatine of Lancaster, and sometimes assumes it when she travels *incognito*. See for fuller discussion *Pol Cyclopaedia*. Bohn series, vol. III., p. 444. Aikin's *History of Manchester*, vol. I., p. 24.

- (2.) HUNDRED.—The territorial division into hundreds was very ancient among the Teutonic races, and is mentioned by Tacitus (Germ. 6 and 12.) In England the constitution of the hundreds is so anomalous that it is impossible to ascertain the principle on which it is founded. Some of the smaller *shires* present the greatest number of hundreds, but this may have arisen from their being densely populated. Some writers have supposed that the hundreds consisted of 100 families of freemen; but the hypotheses on the subject are little more than guesses. (See *Hume*.) Spelman infers the identity of the *Wapentack* or military array. This, says Hume, signifies the touching of arms, and was derived from the ceremony which took place on the inauguration of the chief magistrate, when, having dismounted from his horse, he fixed his spear in the ground, which was then touched with the spears of those present. This was the military origin of the hundred. Concerning its introduction into Britain, it is supposed that somewhere about the time of Edgar the county was divided into *titling*, of which twelve made a *hundred*. The Saxon hundred meant 120, hence perhaps the frequent use of the number 12 in our legal processes. These *hundreds* were presided over by the *Decanus* or *head-borough*, or *hundred-man*, and were represented in the *shire-mote*; and this aggregate body the shire, presided over by its earl, or bishop, or sheriff, conducted its own internal affairs. Aikin, writing in 1795, says the county of Lancashire is divided into the following Six Hundreds;—Salford, West Derby, Leyland, Blackburne, Amounderness, and Lonsdale; and that the Hundred of Salford contained not less than thirty townships, including Ashton-under-Lyne. He further tells us that the Hundred of Salford paid <sup>14</sup>/<sub>100</sub> of the county rates, and raised 293 militia men. Aikin *History of Manchester*, vol. I. p. 25.

vegetable objects, of extraordinary size. This rock is useful as a walling stone. The Up-Holland flag-rock makes its appearance at the eastern boundary at Stalybridge, and averages fifteen yards in thickness ; it is useful for flags, slate, &c. In this rock a *Stigmara* was found, twenty-four feet long, twelve-and-a-half inches in diameter, and laid across the strata, the bark being converted into beautiful coal.

At Brown Edge, or Hartshead, is a quarry of coarse sandstone. The loose blocks of the quarry have a variety of crystals of the black oxide of manganese. The Parbold rock is seen at Mossley. The Haslingden flag rock is an extensively useful material, existing near Mossley, and averages upwards of fifteen yards in thickness. At extreme eastern limits of the parish the higher millstone grit approaches the surface ; it is an average of thirty yards in thickness, and a durable material. In superficial gravel formations, in the eastern side of the parish, some small remains of mammalia are found teeth of the ox, deer, &c., and the vertebræ of others, are occasionally found. The springs of Limehurst have a tendency to deposit the carbonate of lime, and form incrustations, but so slowly as scarcely to be worthy of particular notice. The parish, from the first development of the Bardsley formation to the foot of the higher millstone grit, comprises a section equal to 1256 yards. The coal seams themselves comprise no less than 135 feet when continued together, and the number of seams are about 50, not including many which are too small to be worked with any advantage. Through the south end of the parish, and in the direction from east to west, an immense deposit of sand presents itself, in some places fifteen yards thick, and is intersected by thick veins of silt, or consolidated mud. It is probable the course of the river Tame was different in a remote age to what it is now. The coal strata of this parish is remarkably prolific in vegetable fossils ; they have been found at considerable depths, varying from 150 to 1,000 feet from the earth's surface. A

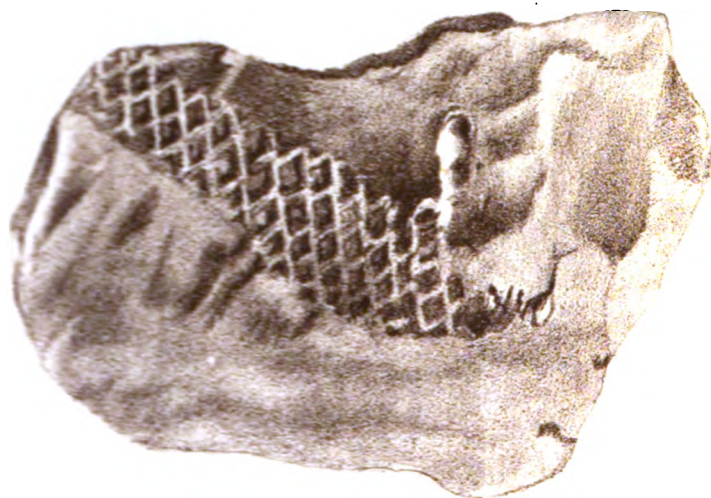


*Specimen of Laminar Coal.*

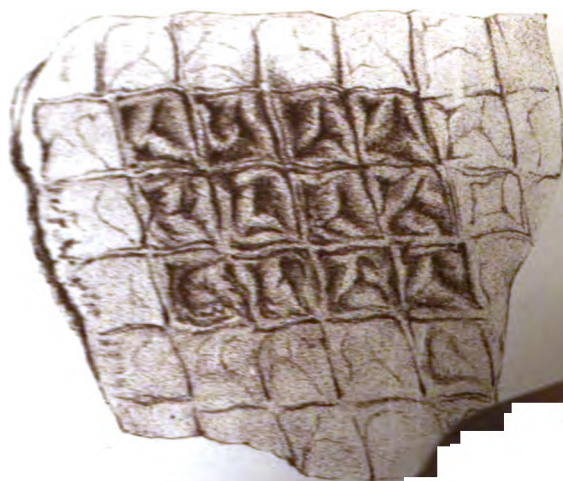


*Specimen of Vegetable Fossil Remains.*





*Specimen of Vegetable Fossil Remains*



*Specimen of Vegetable Fossil Remains*

fossilised insect was discovered at Fairbottom in a nodule of iron-stone." (3)

Referring to the geological construction of the parish, we must not omit to notice what is known as Ashton Moss. Not many years ago this peat moss extended over a space, says Butterworth, of 200 acres ; and adds, " There are evident proofs that this bog has at some former period extended over a surface three or four times the extent it lately occupied; for in excavating in the very centre of the town of Ashton in 1833-4, and at the south-west side, peat three feet in thickness has been met with three or four feet from the surface. The average thickness of moss was from five to six feet, the first eight or ten inches of a lightish brown colour, and very spongy, then about two feet of dense black peat; and, lastly, from eighteen to twenty inches of trunks of trees, beautifully preserved. These trunks lay in the direction from the high land to the lower land of the parish, or north-east to north-west. This appears to confirm the idea that this peat bog has, at some remote period, suddenly been removed from a more elevated site, and in its progress overwhelmed the forest that stood here, which most probably gave sufficient resistance to determine the present situation of the Moss. The timber under this formation is chiefly birch ; at first it appears firm, but, after a little exposure, it falls to pieces. It ignites easily, and burns with a bright blaze. Red fir trees were formerly found, which, being full of turpentine, served the poor turf-cutters for candles. The Moss was once a *shaking bog*; nevertheless, it could be passed at any season at various points, but not over all its surface. As it was obvious that, with proper drainage, the peat might be cultivated to advantage, and as at a depth of ten feet, a tolerable soil of loam, easily convertible into meadow, was found, operations for its reclamation were commenced in 1832 by Mr. Reed, at the cost of the Earl of Stamford. In 1839 a considerable change was manifest, and the soil had already begun to repay the owner for the great trouble and expense bestowed." (4)

(3.) "Geological Sketches," &c., by C. Clay, cited by E. Butterworth.

B—1.

(4.) *Ibid*, p. 120.

The parish, it is also supposed contains mineral waters of no mean qualities, which might be utilised for medicinal purposes; but these have not hitherto been of any considerable advantage, there having been a want of interest in the matter, and of deeper research. Some years ago a *chalybeate* spring was discovered near Waterhouses, and another at Lees. The water was analysed by Dr. Walker of Huddersfield, who pronounced it to contain chiefly sulphate of iron. It was recommended for some time in scorbutic and scrofulous complaints, and attained a considerable degree of renown, but it is now scarcely referred to, being, as a local historian says, "as much under-rated as it was formerly over-valued." Many of the springs and field drains about the hamlet of Littlemoss to-day show traces of the presence of iron in the water that flows therein. Lime springs are also known to exist at Bardsley and Limehurst; and in 1845 a strong sulphurous spring was discovered while sinking a well at Riversvale. "It is rather remarkable," says a local authority on the subject, "that none of the springs of the surrounding parishes indicate the presence of sulphur, and yet so strongly impregnated is the water referred to that it is wholly unfit for any but medicinal purposes."

The rivers running through the parish are the Tame and the Medlock. The Tame rises in the West Riding of Yorkshire, above the present Greenfield Waterworks, and runs south, then west, separating Ashton from Dukinfield, and Lancashire from Cheshire, and taking a south-westerly course, finally becomes the Mersey at Stockport. A venerable topographer of the Elizabethan age (1577), named Harrison, gives us the following quaint sketch of the course of the Tame:—"The Tame, which diuideth Chestershire and Lancastershyres in sunder, and whose head is the very edge of Yorkeshyre, goeth southwarde to Saddleworth-Firth, then to Mukelhurst, Staly-hal, Ashton-under-Line, Dunkefield, Dentun, Reddish, and so at Stockeford, or Stopford, into

the Mersey streame.”<sup>(5)</sup> It is about 18 miles in length, and has the following rivulets affluent to it: Thornlee-brook, Spout-brook, Cock-brook, Knott-brook, and Shepley-brook.

The Medlock, fed by three inconsiderable streams, takes its rise at Beesom-hill, in the parish of Oldham, “then flowing to Waterhead Mill, becomes (for a short distance) the boundary line betwixt the northern portion of Ashton and Prestwich-cum-Oldham parishes. Having passed Lees, the stream has Ashton parish on both sides, and at Holts receives a rill from Scouthead, in Saddleworth, which passes the east side of Lees and by Hopkin Mill. From Holts the brook flows through the valley of Rocher. To the south-west of Rocher, the rivulet is much increased by the junction of the brook at Parkbridge. This branch rises near Dirt-car, adjacent to the town of Oldham. The Medlock now flows to the west-south-west, by Fairbottom, Bardsley, Waterhouses, Medlock Vale, and is augmented by a small stream from Knott Hill, Smallshaw, Buckley Mill, &c.”<sup>(6)</sup> A few paces west of Medlock Vale this river enters the parish of Manchester, and passing through Droylsden, Clayton Bridge, Bradford, and Chorlton-upon-Medlock falls into the Irwell. Its general direction is from north-east to west-south-west, and its length is about eleven miles.

The parish of Ashton-under-Lyne is situated below the chain of hills running from Staffordshire through Derbyshire, and Cheshire, and separate Lancashire from Yorkshire, and are with propriety called the “backbone of England,” running through the middle of the country. “The highest elevation of the parish is at its north-east and north sides, declining gradually to the plain of South Lancashire, its lowest sides being at the south and south-western points. The highest land in the parish, Hartshead Pike, is not more than 800 feet above the level of the sea.”

It is supposed that these hills cause the vapours from the Atlantic Ocean to settle upon the adjacent district in great

(5.) “Geological Sketches,” &c., by C. Clay, cited by E. Butterworth.

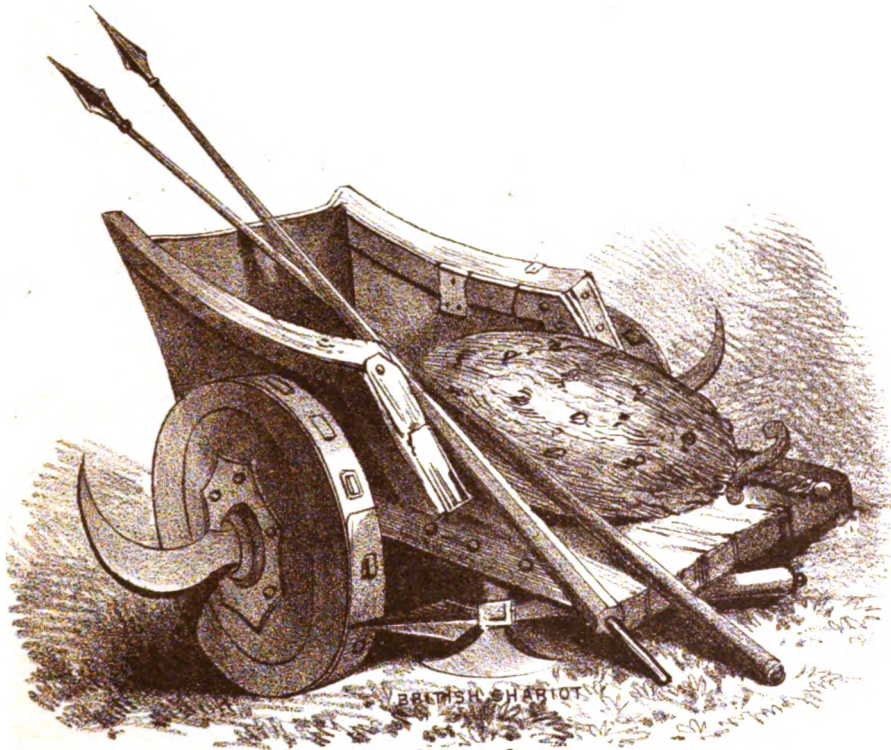
(6.) *Ibid.* p. 119. (7.) “Geological Sketches. Clay.

abundance, causing the atmosphere to be very humid. While this has its disadvantages, it has also its beneficial effects on the neighbourhood, for its humid atmosphere, combined with the fact that it possesses great coal fields, good water, and most convenient access and egress, both by rail, road, and canal, make this parish one of the most acceptable for cotton manufacturing purposes in the United Kingdom.

The parish<sup>(8)</sup> is divided into four principal parts, bearing the names of Ashton Town, Hartshead, Knott-Lanes, and Audenshaw. Hartshead is the largest in area of the four divisions, but not the most populous. The municipal borough and the town of Ashton are co-extensive.

- (8.) PARISH.—This word is probably derived from the French *paroisse*, and the Latin *parochia*, and originally from the Greek *paroikia*. It denotes a circumscribed territory, varying in extent and population, but annexed to a single church. In the early ages of Christianity the term appears to have been used to designate the diocese of a bishop as distinguished from the *provincia*, of the archbishop or metropolitan, (See Du Cange, *Gloss.*, ad verb. "*Parochia*"; also Selden's *History of Titles*, chap. vi., sect. 3. These large ecclesiastical provinces were afterwards broken down and sub-divided, for which ministers were appointed, subject to the bishop, and paid out of the common treasury of the bishopric. This state of things probably continued till towards the end of the third century. The creation of parishes in England was the gradual result of circumstances, and was not fully effected till near the time of the conquest. As Christianity became the universal religion, and the population of the country increased, the bishoprics and monasteries became inadequate, and lords of manors began to build upon their own demesnes churches for the religious purposes of their families and tenants. Each founder assigned a definite district within which the minister should officiate. The same was endowed, the revenue being received from the tithes and endowments.—For fuller discussion see *Political Cyclopædia*, Bohn series *ref. lib.*, vol. III., p. 450.





## The British Period.



### CHAPTER II.

The Brigantes—The Voluntii and Sistuntii—The Sentantii—Bards-ley—Druidism in Rother Vale—Druidical Remains—The Sacred Grove—Habits of the Local Britons—The British Town of Mancenion—Mancenion taken by Agricola—Its new name Mancunium.

**T**HIS district, known as the Parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, prior to the Roman invasion of Britain, B.C. 55, formed part of a very extensive tract of country peopled by the Brigantes, one of the most powerful British tribes. This tribe, we are informed, included several smaller ones, two of which, the *Voluntii* and the *Sistuntii*, occupied the western part of this extensive territory; the former holding the southern portion of Cumberland

and Westmoreland, and a great part of modern Lancashire, and the latter the country extending from the Lake District to the sea coast and the Scottish border. The spaces between the greater tribes were occupied by many smaller ones, and the greater tribe, Brigantes, became such by gradually absorbing many of less magnitude.<sup>(1)</sup> It is supposed that one of these smaller tribes—afterwards absorbed by the more powerful tribe Brigantes—called the *Sentantii*, inhabited this part of Lancashire.

Edwin Butterworth, accepting Whitaker as an authority on the matter, inserts the following interesting account of this tribe in his history:—"The Rev. John Whitaker, historian of Manchester, an ingenious and singularly entertaining antiquary, asserts Ashton and other adjoining parishes to have been the first portions of Lancashire inhabited by the *Sentantii*, or dwellers amidst the country of the waters, a wandering tribe whom he believes to have invaded this part of the province five hundred years before the birth of Christ! The Druids were the priests of the *Sentantii* and the other native tribes; and such of the priesthood as committed to memory by meter the distinguished acts of the chiefs were called *Bards*. The early mansion of *Bardsley* is conjectured to have been the field or grove of the Druidical bards. The antiquities of the parish connected with the remote era of Druidism were in existence within memory, and consisted of two circular basins wrought out of solid rock. The Medlock now flows over that part of the rock. The larger is yet discoverable below a weir or dam at a coalworks in Rocher Vale, Knott-Lanes; it is six feet in diameter and three in depth. The smaller, now buried under an embankment, is perfectly circular and smooth within, and is represented to be of the somewhat extraordinary dimensions of nine inches in width and eighteen feet in depth. Several circumstances indicate that they have been wrought by art for Druidical rites. According to Borlase, such basins were used for 'Lustrations and purifications by water.'

(1.) Ptolem *Geograph.*, viii., 2. *Itinerary of Antoninus*. Baxter's *Gloss. Brit.* Horsley's *Brit. Rom.*, cited by Reilly. *History of Manchester*, p. 3.

These remains were known by the common name of *Pots and Pans*.<sup>(2)</sup> A cell, once inhabited as a human dwelling, was excavated out of the rock on the summit of a perpendicular cliff overlooking Rocher Vale. The legend of the hamlet points to the lone spot as the scene of a tragical deed, perpetrated on a female."<sup>(3)</sup>

That this tribe indulged in habits and customs common to the rest of the aborigines of Britain cannot be doubted. It is easy, therefore, to imagine this district in those ante-historic times, covered with the richest and most luxuriant vegetation, and well wooded with beautiful trees, and inhabited by a semi-savage people, led by their druids to appease their deities by holocausts, practising the diviner's art, or tattooing their bodies with the woad; now preparing themselves and their rude chariots for some petty struggle; now marching in confusion, armed with shields, javelins, and pointless swords, or returning from the battle chanting the genealogies and heroic deeds of their leaders and mighty men to the sound of the *chrotta*.<sup>(4)</sup>

The Britons were naturally very clannish. Those of the same blood were associated for the maintenance of their rude interests. Both the valour of their chiefs and the honour of their bards were especially dear to them. Hence those of the same ancestry, whose interests were common and mutual, formed communities for the perpetuation of their distinctive claims, their genealogies, and for self-defence. In places offering peculiar advantages for defence, they cleared the timber, which, almost everywhere, flourished in great abundance in those days—especially so in this district, on account of which some have inferred that in its pristine condition it was little more than a trackless forest—and erected huts of the rudest construction. The best authorities inform us that "these

(2.) A weir has been thrown across the river a few yards above these relics of Druidism, and and they are now buried in a sub-stratum of *debris* many yards in thickness.

(3.) *Hist. of Ashton* (Butterworth), pp. 9, 10. Ed. 1842.

(4.) *CHROTTA*.—*Crowd* or *Cruith*, an ancient instrument like a violin, with six strings, four of which were played upon a bow, and the other two played or plucked with the thumb, as an accompaniment. The neck had a hole through which the player thrust his hand, so that he could only command the notes lying under his fingers.—See *Mus. Dic.*, Stainer and Barrett.



villages consisted chiefly of slight cabins of reeds and wattles, and, in some instances, of caverns in the earth, many sets of which were arranged with an approach to symmetry. These were invariably surrounded by a rampart, constructed of felled trees, strongly interlaced and wattled, and a deep fosse or ditch, which together formed a kind of fortification."

Long before the invasion of Britain by the Romans the local tribes had cleared portions of the forest, and erected a cluster of huts on the banks of the Irwell, and called the place *Mancenion*, which Whitaker interprets as signifying the "Place of Tents." This town or village, *Mancenion*, was the great centre of operations for the local tribes. From Mancenion they sallied forth to battle, from it they commenced their chase, and to it they returned when the battle had ceased to rage or the chase was over. From it the Druids led their people to Rocher Vale to perform their lustrations, or to the Sacred Grove at Bardsley to carry out their religious rites. The establishment of this British village, Mancenion, was the beginning of the great city of Manchester.

The location of this British village, Mancenion, was near the confluence of the Medlock and the Irwell, for a long time subsequently known as Castle Field.<sup>(5)</sup> Reilly says:—"It appears to have covered an area of about twelve acres, and was protected on the east and north by a deep fosse, on the west by a precipitous bank easily defended, and on the south by the Medlock, access to which was gained by a path hewn out of the rock."<sup>(6)</sup> This is also supported by Aikin, who affirms that "The Roman invaders of this country fixed a station for a body of troops in a place called Castle Field, to which they gave the name of *Mancunim*, probably borrowed from a name given it by the British inhabitants of the vicinity."<sup>(7)</sup>

(5.) The British remains that have been found on the site of this ancient town are few, and even these are conjectural. Among them we may mention a well, undoubtedly of great antiquity, opened in Castle Field in 1830, and supposed by antiquarians to be British. A stone celt or axe-head, also found at the same place, was formerly kept in the Chetham Library, but it has been removed, and its present resting-place is unknown. See Reilly's *Hist. of Manchester*, p. 6.

(6.) *Ibid.* (7.) Aikin's *Manchester*, vol. I., p. 147.

But a change in the history and possession of this part of Britain took place, in which British influence and rule were supplanted by that of their Roman conquerors. The efforts of Cæsar to subjugate this part of Britain had proved abortive. It was not till A.D. 79 that this portion of our island was occupied by the Roman legions. Reilly gives us the following instructive account of how this was accomplished:—“It was reserved for Agricola to carry the Roman arms to those parts of the country which had not, as yet, been brought into subjection to the imperial rule. This General was appointed to the command in Britain in the autumn of A.D. 78. He spent the winter in regulating and reforming the Government, and in correcting the innumerable abuses which had crept into the administration. As the summer of the year 79 approached, Agricola took the field, and setting out from Deva, marched through the district now constituting the county of Chester, and entered Lancashire by the ford over the Mersey at Stretford. From the latter place the distance to Mancenion was but short. The town was soon reached, attacked, and taken, despite the determined resistance offered by the Britons, who were driven out to find shelter in the surrounding woods. Thus ended the British period of Mancenion’s history.” British influence was now suppressed in the district, for it is believed that the Britons were so thoroughly overwhelmed by the superiority of the Roman arms, that they settled down in a peaceable manner under the imperial rule.





## The Roman Period.

### CHAPTER III.

Division of the Roman Empire—Division of Britain—Maxima Cæsariensis—  
The New Town Mancunium—The Romans Cultivate the Land—Make  
Good Roads—Roman Roads through Ashton and Dukinfield.

**A**FTER the Roman Conquest, we learn from a document, compiled about A.D. 400, and called the *Notitia Imperii*, that Diocletian divided the Roman Empire into four great sub-divisions called *Præfectures*. Britain formed a third and minor division in the præfecture of the Gauls, and was governed by an officer, called a *Vicarius*,<sup>(1)</sup> who resided at *Eboracum* (York). Britain again was divided, first into four, and subsequently into the five following divisions:—

1st.—*Britannia Prima*: The country south of the Thames and Bristol Channel.

2nd.—*Britannia Secunda*: The country between the Severn and the Dee.

(1.) *Vicarius*, a Latin word signifying a person who performed the office or duty of another, a *deputy*—a substitute.

3rd.—*Flavia Cæsariensis* : The country north of the Thames, east of the Severn, and south of the Humber and Mersey.

4th.—*Maxima Cæsariensis* : The country north of the Mersey and Humber to the Wall of Severus.

5th.—*Valentia* : The country between the Wall of Severus and the Rampart of Antoninus, and south part of Scotland.

Ashton, if the authority of Richard of Cirencester is to be relied on, would be situated near the southern borders of the fourth division, namely, *Maxima Cæsariensis*. While the whole was under the rule of the Vicarius, the subdivisions were presided over by officers of inferior rank, known either by the name of *Præses* or *Consularis*. *Maxima Cæsariensis*,<sup>(2)</sup> in which Ashton was situated, was under the control of a *Consularis*, to whom this place was not unknown in consequence of its importance as part of the district of the Roman Station, Mancunium.

The Romans being in complete possession, and seeing that the Britons were indisposed to struggle any longer, turned their attention to the improvement of the condition of their new territory. They began by building a new town, north of the old British town *Mancenion*, to which they gave the name of Mancunium, (evidently only the Latin form of Mancenion). Having finished the town, they next turned their attention to the agricultural requirements of the neighbourhood, for it is admitted, that it was "to the Romans that the Britons of this part of the country were indebted for their knowledge of agriculture. Upon the cultivation of the land the conquerors placed especial honour. The Roman soldiers, therefore, who formed the garrison became the first cultivators of the land in the neighbourhood of this station. Their example was not lost upon the Britons, who cleared the ground of its forest trees, and raising upon it large crops of corn, depended no longer upon the precarious produce of the chase for their support."<sup>(3)</sup> There can be no question as to the beneficial

(2.) *Maxima Cæsariensis* was governed by a *Consularis*, that is a person not then a Consul, but of Consular rank.

(3.) See Reilly's *Hist. of Manchester*, p. 9.

effect or of the civilizing influence which the Roman garrison had upon the Britons of this neighbourhood. In addition to this important station, Mancunium, they also established camps of a subordinate nature, probably as outposts, or protection against surprise, or, as some suppose, "for the protection of cattle." Traces of these camps have been found at Delph, Stockport, and a number of other places. Between Mancunium and other stations, both near and distant, the Romans made good roads for the safe transit of soldiers and their *impedimenta*, and to facilitate their communications between one town and another. No less than five of these old roads are distinctly traceable from Mancunium in the present day, the remains of others being liable to conjecture; but even these may yet be discovered, and the direction traversed by them settled beyond all contradiction. One of the five roads, about which there is not the slightest doubt, connected Mancunium and Cambodunum, supposed, says Reilly, to be Slack, near Huddersfield, in Yorkshire. "This road," he continues, "evident traces of which may be seen in many places, crossed what is now the township of Manchester in a direction east-north-east, and entering Newton township proceeded by Cheetham Fold, the Street in Failsworth, Honeywell Lane, Glodwick, and Lees Brook, in Oldham Below Town, entering Yorkshire near Austerlands, whence it continued its course to Old Delph and Castle Hill, and passing over Millstone Edge, near the present Standedge Tunnel, on the Manchester and Huddersfield Branch of the London and North-Western Railway, reached Cambodunum, from which place it proceeded by Legiolium (Castleford) and Calcaria (Tadcaster) to Eboracum (York)." (4). This information is very

(4.) See Reilly's *Hist. of Manchester*, p. 8. The other roads, about which there is little or no doubt, are given by Reilly as follows:—1st, Watling Street, proceeding from the station at Castle Field, followed the direction of the present old road to Stretford, where it crossed the Mersey and entered Cheshire. It then pursued its course by Cross Street, Dunham Park, to Street Head, from which place the existing road to Knutsford (Canute's Ford) occupies its site till it arrived at Mere Town, and thence inclining to Northwich proceeded to Condate (Kinderton), near Middlewich, from which several roads branched off in different directions. This road connected Mancunium with the various stations in the north and west of Britain. A continuation of the same road connected Mancunium with Coccium (Ribchester). This road followed the direction of modern Deansgate, Strangeways, and Bury New Road, till it reached Prestwich, whence it proceeded

important, inasmuch as it helps us to clear much of the confusion that has existed in the minds of some historians when referring to this period in our local history. Some have written as if a Roman road had passed *through* the Town of Ashton. Others, confusing one that passed through Dukinfield with the one referred to above, have fallen into the dilemma which has been so ably exposed by Edwin Butterworth; while others have determined that there never was such a road in the Parish. Taking the route given above by Reilly as well authenticated, it is clear that this important highway did pass through a northern portion of the Parish, and afterwards passed into Yorkshire. Hence Butterworth says, "Manchester in Lancashire, and Aldmondbury in Yorkshire, were Stations of the Romans; and in order to connect these towns the Conquerors were obliged to construct a road through the higher part of the tract of country which was afterwards the Parish of Ashton-under-Lyne. Remains of this road are still existing at *Street*, in the adjoining Township of Failsworth. The better to facilitate the opening of the forests, and the subjugation of the natives, the legions threw up a trench across the hills, in a line with the *iler*." <sup>(5)</sup> In another place he adds "The Roman way from Manchester to Aldmondbury skirted the section of the parochial tract called Lyme or Line, and afterwards traversing Oldham, entered Ashton-under-Lyne parish at Lees, passed Hey Chapel, and immediately entered Saddleworth." <sup>(6)</sup>

Besides this, it is clear that there was a Roman road from Stockport which passed through Dukinfield and Staley (Old Mottram Road), then traversed Mottram and crossed the Moors, probably uniting with the Road from Mancunium to Aldmond-

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in a north-north-west direction by the Dales, and Radcliffe; and resuming the name of Watling Street at Offside, continued its course by Edgworth, Blacksnape, Darwin, &c. 2nd. This road, going from Mancunium in a direction almost north-north-east, passed by Street Fold in Moston, Street Bridge in Chadderton, Street Gate in Royton, and so on to Littleborough. Turning from the latter place east-north-east, it curved Blackstone Edge, where its course for a considerable distance is still very distinct, and proceeded to Olicana (Ilkley). 3rd. This road united Mancunium with Buxton, and pursued the course of the present highway to Stockport. 4th. This road, leading to Blackrod, near Wigan, crossed the Irwell at a place known as Woden's Ford, not far from Old Trafford, &c.

(5) Edwin Butterworth. *Hist. of Ashton*, p. 10. Ed. 1842.

(6) *Ibid*.

bury, somewhere near Saddleworth. Mr. Whitaker evidently confused these roads when he wrote implying that the road from Stockport passed through Ashton. His reference to this road is as follows : " This way (which) extended into the Ashton parish, near the fort of Stalybridge, was the third road from this Station, and is denominated Staley Street for a mile together." Upon this Edwin Butterworth very justly remarks—" The first sentence is obviously incorrect, for the direct line would be through Staley, on the *opposite* side of the Tame, and therefore not through Ashton."<sup>(7)</sup> Hence, says Watkin, " there was a Roman road leading from the station at Melandra Castle, on the Derbyshire bank of the Mersey, about a mile east-south-east of Mottram, after passing through a portion of Cheshire, where it is known as Stayley Lane, enters Lancashire at Stalybridge, and about a quarter of a mile to the north of that town is still used as a road, being called ' Stayley Street.' About a mile from the town a ' Windy Harbour ' occurs on the route, and between Luzley and Mossley it is again used as a highway. It enters Yorkshire at the latter place, after a course of two miles and a half through Lancashire, and a little more than two miles further on falls into the road from *Mancunium* to *Cambodunum*, at a place called ' Doctor Head.' "<sup>(8)</sup> This is undoubtedly a branch of the same road referred to in the MSS. of the Rev. R. B. Aspland, M.A., where he writes, " The Romans were the only good road makers in Britain. Dukinfield had the benefit of a military road constructed by them, which, beginning at Stockport, passed through the township, ascended the hill to Mottram, and then crossed the desolate moors to Sheffield. A friend of mine, now in the possession of the Dukinfield Hall, has within a few years turned the road opposite to the Hall, and on digging up the old road, which he had enclosed preparatory to laying it down for grass, came, at an unusual depth, to the remains of an ancient road, which I have no doubt (although I had not the good fortune to see them) were Roman." To illustrate the passible

(7.) Edwin Butterworth. *Hist. of Ashton*, p. 10. Ed. 1842. (8.) Roman Lancashire, p. 86.

condition of this road at the beginning of the 17th century, he relates the following incident:—"In the year 1616, Anne, the Countess of Pembroke and Dorset, passed on a journey from Yorkshire through Dukinfield. She was on her way 'to see,' as the book says from which I take this account, 'her blessed mother.' The first day's journey was from Rotherham to Penistone. There she lay at a poor parson's house, there being no inn capable of receiving her. The second day's journey across Penistone Moor conducted her through Mottram and Dukinfield to Manchester."<sup>(9)</sup> If Mr. Aspland be correct, she must have gone to Manchester round by Stockport. But supposing, what is highly probable, that the roads from Stockport and Manchester united either in the vicinity of Saddleworth or Cambodunum (Slack), then her best route would have been by the road which skirted the northern boundary of Ashton Parish. Which of the two routes she really took is hard to determine in the absence of any statement in his MSS. as to his authority.

After the Romans had occupied Britain for about 400 years they were compelled to evacuate the island, "for effeminacy and luxury had sapped the foundations of the empire, and the days of its existence were numbered." In consequence of troubles which arose nearer home, caused by the incursions of the Goths, Vandals, and Alans into Italy, Honorius withdrew his legions, and left the Britons once more free to defend their fatherland against subsequent invasion.

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(9.) Aspland MSS., *A Cheshire Village in Olden Time*, p. 4.







The Saxon Period.



#### CHAPTER IV.

British Jealousy—Picts and Scots—The Home of the Saxons—Sidonius on their Daring Spirit—The Saxons to the Rescue—The Heptarchy—Northumbria and Mercia—First Residence of the Thanes of Ashton—Etymology of *Ashton* and *under-Lyne*.

**T**HE Britons being once more freed from the yoke of a foreign power sought to develop the resources at their disposal for the permanent occupation of their own country. But no sooner did they begin to practise the lessons of self-defence, which they had learned from the Romans, than they were hopelessly thwarted in every attempt by internal feuds; and the same feeling of "jealousy and mistrust," which had been so favourable to the success of the Romans,<sup>(1)</sup> once more threw the country into a state of anarchy.

(1.) *Vita Agricola* XII.

The Picts and the Scots,<sup>(2)</sup> looking to Britain with longing eyes, now saw a favourable opportunity of conducting a successful campaign against the disunited Britons, and marched into Britain by every available way. For some time they met with little opposition, inasmuch as the Britons were rendered powerless by internal factions. The Picts and Scots therefore "spread ruin and desolation on every side," destroying in their triumphant march many a Roman fort, which might have been of the greatest service to the Britons had they been united. When on the point of despair, having failed in their negotiations with the Roman general in Gaul for assistance, they resorted to a plan which ultimately proved fatal to their interests. They called in the Saxons to help them to drive back their northern invaders. These Saxons "in the middle of the fifth century, the time of their first gaining a footing in Britain, held territory which embraced the whole of the land washed by the eastern side of the German Ocean, including both East and West Friesland, Holland, and Zealand, besides Westphalia, Saxony, and the countries further north."<sup>(3)</sup> The part of those regions in which the Saxons had their home when first they figured in the world's history consists of numerous islands, and of a shore marked by intricate windings, creeks, and bays, exposed, moreover, to all the influences of northern tempests and cold. Everything there seemed to combine to ensure maritime proficiency and a hardy spirit of adventure. The Saxons became all that the physical geography of their country would lead us to expect. Steady industry they despised. Their swords were their

- (2.) *Picts and Scots*. From the 11th century the Scots are mentioned as the inhabitants of Ireland, and that island bore the name of *Scotia*. . . . The Gaelic spoken by the Scotch Highlanders is the same language as the Erse spoken by the Irish, and there can be no doubt that it was brought into Britain by the Irish Scots. That the Picts were Celts, and akin to the Welsh rather than the Gael, appears from the names of their kings, of whom a genuine list, from the fifth century downwards, has been preserved. Almost the only Pictish word given as such by an ancient writer is *Pen val*, the name given by the Picts to the eastern termination of the Vallum of Antoninus. *Pen* is decidedly Welsh. The name of *Ochil* hills, in Perthshire, in the country of the Picts, is to be explained from the Welsh *uchel*, "high." Again the Welsh prefix *aber* in local names in the Pictish territory was changed into the Gaelic *inver* after the occupation of the country by the Gaelic Scots. Thus *Inverin* and *Invernethy* were previously *Aberin* and *Abernethy*. See Garnett, *Transactions of the Philological Society*, vol. i., p. 119. Cited by Hume, p. 17. Note.
- (3.) Ptol. *Geog.* xi., c. 11. *Europa tab.* Eutrop. ix. Ethelward, *Chron. pref.*, lib. i. Bede, *Hist. Eccles.*, lib. i., c. 15; lib. v., c. 11.

only trust. Plunder by sea or by land was their chief vocation. Band after band, as they subdued districts, settled in them, compelling the vanquished to cultivate the ground for them, while they sallied forth themselves, from season to season, in search of new adventures and new spoil. Every man had his chief, to whom he promised fidelity, and when the enterprise was of sufficient importance to embrace several chiefs, one was invested with the supreme authority for the occasion."<sup>(4)</sup> Sidonius, referring to the courage and daring spirit of these men, says: "We have not a more cruel and dangerous enemy than the Saxons. They overcome all who have the courage to oppose them. They surprise all who are so imprudent as not to be prepared for their attack. When they pursue they inevitably overtake, when they are pursued their escape is certain. They despise danger; they are inured to shipwreck; they are eager to purchase booty with the peril of their lives. Tempests, which to others are so dreadful, to them are subjects of joy. The storm is their protection when they are pursued by the enemy, and a cover for their operations when they meditate an attack. Before they quit their own shores they devote to the altars of their gods the tenth part of the principal captives; and when they are on the point of returning the lots are cast with an affectation of equity, and the impious vow is fulfilled."<sup>(5)</sup>

These, then, were the men whom the Britons called to their aid, and who readily consented, in the hope of not only driving out the Picts and Scots, but with the sinister design of conquering Britain for themselves. Accordingly not less than six different settlements of these Germans took place in less than one hundred years. From being allies they became masters, and among them Britain was divided into seven principal parts, called the seven kingdoms of the *Heptarchy*,<sup>(6)</sup> namely, Kent, Sussex, Wessex,

(4.) Reilly's *Hist. Manchester*, p. 13.

(5.) Sidon. viii. 6. Cited by Lingard i., p. 73, by Hume p. 22.

(6.) Heptarchy, from the Greek words *hepta*, seven, and *arche*, kingdom or government. "But," says Freeman, "I do not think this a good name. For *heptarchia* in Greek would not mean seven kingdoms close together, but rather a single government in the hands of some persons. And the name *Heptarchy* also gives the idea of a more regular state of things than there really was, as if there had always been exactly seven kingdoms, neither ever

Essex, East Anglia, Mercia, and *Northumbria*. These kingdoms were governed by petty Kings, among whom there were constant struggles for the position of *Bretwalda*.<sup>(7)</sup> Rival claims then began to be set up among these Saxons, and it was in these struggles, chiefly between the Saxon divisions—Northumbria and Mercia—that Ashton and Dukinfield became places of considerable importance. The district west of East Anglia was called the *March* or *Boundary*. Later it was known as *Mercia*, and was under the control of the chiefs of East Anglia, who were subject to the more powerful king of the district north of the Tame, the Humber, and Mersey, which was called North-Humber-Land or *Northumbria*.

About the year A.D. 626, Penda, a valiant and daring Mercian, proclaimed Mercia an independent state. Dukinfield being situated on the banks of the Tame, which separated Northumbria from Mercia, was fortified to resist the Northumbrians, against whose rule the Mercians had revolted. These bulwarks were opposed by equally strong outworks on the Ashton or northern side of the river, for the Saxon chief, finding the ash, which was held in great veneration by the Saxons, in a flourishing condition here, and discerning in the rising ground a place of considerable advantage for the defence of his southern borders, "fixed upon the mount the first habitation of the subsequent Thanes of Ashton-under-Lyne,"<sup>(8)</sup> and for a considerable time, it is supposed, the battle between the rival kingdoms raged on the banks of the Tame. At length Edwin, King of Northumbria and Bretwalda,

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nor fewer. And if we count small states with their king or alderman tributary to a more powerful king we might make up many more than seven. Sometimes one king was so powerful as to get some sort of power over all the others; when this happened he was called a *Bretwalda*." See Freeman's *Old English History*, p. 40.

- (7.) "The *Bretwalda*, that is the supreme Commander or Emperor of Britain, which was often the subject of contention among the different Anglo-Saxon Sovereigns, affords some slight bond of connection to their histories. The institution of a *Bretwalda* among the Anglo-Saxons was probably neither derived from their native customs nor an assumption of the Roman imperial power exercised in the island, but rather a measure sometimes adopted for the necessity of uniting under a common chief against the Britons, the Picts, and the Scots. The dignity was perhaps an elective one. *Hume*, p. 20. The existence of the *Bretwaldas*, at least in earlier times, is disputed by Mr. Hallam and Mr. Kemble. But they are expressly mentioned by Beda, who calls their dignity *Ducatus*, or leadership, in the Saxon chronicle, where these princes are termed *Bretwaldas*, and in charters." See *Hume*, p. 29, note.
- (8.) Butterworth's *Hist.* p. 7. Ed. 1842.

was slain by the formidable Penda. In A.D. 642 Oswald succeeded to the rule of Northumbria, and also to the dignity of Bretwalda. He consolidated his forces, and made an unsuccessful attempt to wrest Mercia from the hands of Penda, but was defeated and slain in the battle. His brother Oswy next succeeded to the Kingdom and the Bretwaldaship, but no sooner was he recognised as Bretwalda than Penda marched his victorious soldiers against him, and having caused him to retreat as far as Leeds, Penda found himself suddenly surrounded, and was slain. The Northumbrians were now for a time masters of the situation, until Offa, who made Mercia the most influential kingdom of the Heptarchy, subjugated them.

Offa died A.D. 796, and eventually Mercia and Northumbria, with the rest of the Kingdoms of the Heptarchy, were subdued by Egbert, one of whose successors united them, and took the title of "*Rex Anglorum*," King of England.

It was during the Anglo-Saxon period that Ashton received its name, at which time it formed part of the Saxon parish of Mancunium, which place at this time also received the Saxon name of *Mameceaster* or *Manigeceaster*, the transition from which to Manchester in more modern times was both easy and natural.

Concerning the etymology of Ashton-under-Lyne there are many conjectures. Some are wild and obviously improbable, while others assume more the appearance of probability. For the sake of clearness it is necessary to divide the term, for there is quite sufficient reason to believe that the adjunct *under Lyne* is of much later date than the name Ashton.

In the oldest manuscripts Ashton is written *Estun* or *Eston*. The derivation of this part of the term is unquestionably of Saxon origin. James Butterworth supposes it to be compounded of the Saxon *Æsc*, or Danish *Aske*, meaning an *Ash tree*, with the Saxon *Tun*, a hedge, or wall, or anything intended as a defence, which is explained as coming from the old British *Dun*, signifying a hill, and therefore, he asserts, "by metaphor it sig-

nifies a habitation, a town, or village;" but one objection to this explanation is its vagueness. Edwin Butterworth, following his predecessor, drops the Danish *Aske*, and with much greater distinctness contends that "the *Estun* of the Ancients in Inquisitions and Surveys of the County, is manifestly formed of *æyc*, an ash, and *tun*, an enclosed place or town; the enclosed *dun*, or *ton*, or *tun* of Ashes." Concerning the accuracy of this definition there can be little or no doubt. *Ashton* or *Eston*, therefore, signifies the place enclosed by ash trees. We have already referred to the establishment of the first habitation of the Thanes of Ashton, and this rude dwelling, therefore, may have been erected on a spot which had been cleared of its brushwood and timber, and around which stood luxuriant and stately ash trees. So far as this definition of the first part of the term is concerned, it is considered satisfactory. The real difficulty is in connection with the adjunct, *under-Lyne*. In Sir John Assheton's rent roll it is written *Ashton-sub-Lima*. Dr. Ormerod thinks this implies that Ashton was either below or under the Lime of Cheshire. This view seems to make Ashton in some way subordinate to Lime, and the Asshetons subject to the Leghs. But, as Edwin Butterworth contends, there is no record of the Asshetons as subordinate to the Leghs of Lime, but otherwise, as is inferred from the following decree of the Earl of Derby, in the reign Henry VII.:—"Sir Piers Lygh (Legh) and his heires shall or mowe bere ye same armes whartly, so they be not in the first quarter, as *Sir Thos. de Assheton*, with a bezant of gold, &c., for difference."<sup>(9)</sup> This decree supplies us with an instance where "the Leghs procure licence to have armorial bearing similar to the Asshetons, implying a superiority in the latter family." It is quite possible that Ormerod had little ground for his conjecture beyond the fact that there is some similarity in the form and sound of the two words. Other equally untenable definitions of the term have been given. One, that it was called Ashton-under-Lyne because it was situated under the line of division between the Saxon kingdoms of Northumbria and Mercia

(9.) Whitaker's Richmondshire, folio 246, vol. ii., adtns. 1823.

In the Early Survey of Manchester it is written *Ashton-Subter-Lineam*.<sup>(10)</sup> Here the affix assumes a distinct Latin form. Hence some persons have been led to the conclusion that it was of Roman origin. But there is the strongest presumption in favour of the assertion that this place during the Roman period was nameless, except as part of the general environments of Mancenion or Mancunium. Others, impressed with the Latinized form of the affix, have contended that Ashton was so designated because it lay near the Roman road which passed through the northern part of the tract of country afterwards known as the Parish of Ashton-under-Lyne. Edwin Butterworth is favourable to this idea, and connects it with the Anglo Saxon period, by supposing that the Roman legions threw up a trench across the hill, in a line with the iter, to facilitate the opening of the forests, and the subjugation of the natives; and that the Saxons, under feelings of admiration and being impressed with the magnitude of this work, were induced to impart the distinguished appellative of *Under Lyne*, or beneath the trench.<sup>(11)</sup> But the terminology of the appellative seems to point to a much later date than the Anglo Saxon period; and there is sufficient reason to believe that it was given subsequent to the Norman Conquest. The most probable opinion on the subject, and the one which has gained most favour among the archæologists of more recent times, is that the adjuncts *Under Lyne* are descriptive of the situation of the town, being, as it is, under or near that very remarkable line of hills which separate Lancashire and Yorkshire,<sup>(12)</sup> and which are popularly known as the "backbone of England," and that it was given to distinguish it from other places not very distant which had already the name of Eston or Ashton.

(10.) Harl. MSS. Codex 2085, fol. 527 b. Barnes' 4to.

(11.) Butterworth's Hist. p. 8. Ed. 1842.

(12.) See "Geographical Sketches," by Charles Clay, also "Report on the Sanitary Condition of Ashton-under-Lyne," by John Ross Coulthart, Esq.





ODINS MINE DERBYSHIRE

## The Danish Period.

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### CHAPTER V.

The Vikings—The Danes Attack Manigeceaster—Nico Ditch—Redditch—  
Danes head Bank—Canute Halts at Knott Lanes.

**T**HE progress hitherto made by our Saxon forefathers was now checked by the inroads of the Danes, and the most flattering views of their future were overcast by these Northmen, who for some centuries kept them in continual alarm, and at last subdued them. These new invaders came from the Scandinavian kingdoms of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, and were in race and language closely connected with the Anglo-Saxons.



“Led by the younger sons of Royal houses, the *Vikings*<sup>(1)</sup> swarmed in all the harbours and rivers of the surrounding countries. Their course was marked by fire and bloodshed. Buildings, sacred and profane, were burnt to the ground, and great numbers of people were murdered or dragged away into slavery. The terrified inhabitants fled at their approach, and beheld in it the judgment of God foretold by the prophets. Their national flag was the figure of a black raven, woven on a blood-red ground, from whose movements the Northmen augured victory or defeat. When it fluttered its wings they believed that Odin gave them the sign of victory, but if the wings hung down they imagined that the God would not prosper their arms. Their swords were longer and heavier than those of the Anglo-Saxons, and their battle axes are mentioned as formidable weapons.”

The Angles had already been in possession of Manicheaster for a considerable time when these Northmen first made their appearance in England. In the “Saxon Chronicle” we find a statement to the following effect concerning their advent, namely, in 787 “came three ships of Northmen out of Hæretha-land. And then the reeve rode to the place, and would have driven them to the king’s town, because they knew not who they were, and they then slew him. These were the first ships of Danishmen which sought the land of the English race.” Again a more terrible band of these Danes came to England about 17 years after the above date, for, as Reilly says, “in 794 another party of these ‘Northmen,’ or ‘Heathenmen,’ as they were called, is said to have ravaged a part of *Northumbria*. These are the only intimations of such incursions previous to the reign of Egbert.” During the ninth century a powerful Norwegian migration set in, so much so that Northumbria was completely overrun by the Northmen. Traces of the Scandinavian occupation are still to be found in the Lancashire dialect, as also in the names of places, as, for instance, Lonsdale, Amounderness, and West Derby, &c.

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(1.) *Viking*, a Danish word, signifying a naval warrior, or a pirate.

(2.) *Hist. of Eng.* Hume pp. 39, 40.

Several battles between the Saxons and the Danes are supposed to have been fought in this neighbourhood. It appears that Manigeceaster was attacked by the Danes, who had now marched to the extreme limit of Northumbria, and having wrecked Manigeceaster they pursued the Saxons in the direction of Eston or Ashton, near to which place the Mercians and Northumbrians united to oppose their common foe. Reilly <sup>(3)</sup> says, concerning one of these conflicts :—"The Hundred of Salford is the most Saxon, or, to speak more strictly, Angle, in Lancashire, and from its inland situation served, no doubt, as a refuge for the inhabitants of the surrounding districts, who fled on the approach of the Danes. But it was in vain the ruthless Northmen pursued them. Manigeceaster suffered severely, and is said to have been well nigh entirely destroyed, and almost depopulated. This appears to have taken place about A.D. 870, at which time the ditch or trench which runs through Denton, Gorton, Birch, &c., and is known as *Nico Ditch*, was made in one night from Ashton Moss to Ouse <sup>4)</sup> Moss, such a number of men being appointed to the work as to cast up each the length of himself, in order to entrench themselves from the Danes, whose name is perpetuated in Danes-head Bank, south of the Ditch. The township of Redditch, or Reddish, adjoining Gorton and Denton, is said to receive its name from the water in Nico Ditch, after the engagement, being red." <sup>(5)</sup> For many years this tradition has

(3.) Reilly, p. 21, quoting an old MS. formerly in the possession of the Rev. Joshua Brookes, M.A., chaplain of the College Church, Manchester.

(4.) Hough's.

(5.) John Higson, referring to the above tradition says :—"The above appears substantially correct, except as to the hill Gorton, which the old residents call 'Winning Hill,' and the name is so written in old title deeds. The tradition is that a great battle was 'won' here, and that the name was given to commemorate the happy event, which unbound the necks of the Saxons from the thralldom of the Danes. During the battle the brook running through Gorton (by traditional etymology Gore-town or the Blood-town) is said to have been filled with human gore, and was thence styled 'Gore Brook,' which name it has certainly borne five centuries and a half. The vale running from Gorton to Audenshaw is 'the Dane Wood.' There are also 'the Danes' in Gorton; 'Dane Head' and 'Dane Shut' in Audenshaw. The two former are supposed to have been occupied by these invaders prior to the final conflict; and after that engagement was over, a fugitive is said to have been decapitated at the third, and another to have been shot at the latter. The probable etymology, however, is 'dane, dene, or den,' a valley with a stream running through it. The formation of Nicker Ditch was apparently anterior to the general cultivation of the land through which it passes, as it forms the meare or boundary of various townships. This is known in the locality as 'Th' Nicko-ditch,' and he thinks its etymology is of Danish origin ;

been regarded as quite correct in the neighbourhood, and the above etymologies as conclusive and unassailable; but it now appears that they are not only vulnerable, but that there is reason to believe that they are incorrect.<sup>(6)</sup>

At a subsequent date Canute himself is supposed to have marshalled his valiant soldiers into this district, and, if tradition be correct, to have halted in the northerly and central parts of the Parish of Ashton, which locality henceforth took its name from the Danish King, namely, Knott-Lanes. *Knott* is inferred to be a corruption of *Nute*, an abbreviation of *Canute*.<sup>(7)</sup>

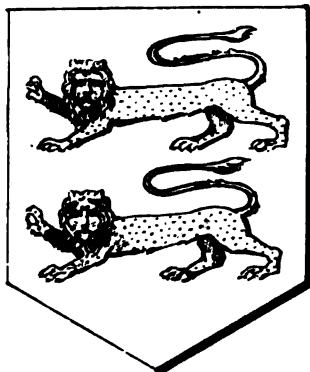
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for according to Scandinavian mythology Odin assumes the name of Nickar, or Hnickar, when he acts as the destroying or evil principle. In this character, and under this name, he inhabits the lakes and rivers of Scandinavia."—See *Lanc. Legends*, p. 28.

- (6.) "As to Gorton, Whitaker is probably right in deriving its name from the brook; but *Gor* (Anglo-Saxon) not only means gore or blood, but also, and with more probable significance here, dirt or mud. It also denotes a triangular plot of land; and either of these meanings is more likely to be the true one than that of a supposed bloody battle with the Danes. Mr. Higson has correctly given the more probable etymology for the places pronounced Dane and Danes; for in Lancashire generally, *dean* or *dene* is pronounced *dane*, and these places are *denes* or hollow places, some of which are to be found in Worsley (the Deans or Danes Brow, &c.) The wood, the head, the shut or shoot (A. S. *scot*, pronounced *shoot*), are all applicable to a little dene, hollow, or valley. And so the invading Danes may disappear from these etymologies; and without them, what becomes of the battle? So as to Reddish, so far from being the red ditch, the etymologies of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are *Re-dich* or *dychs*, i.e., the *reed* or *reed*y ditch. As to Nicko or Nicker ditch, the Old MS. quoted above gives us an alternative, 'Micko,' which we think guides to the true etymology. In deeds of the fourteenth century this was always called the Michel, Mikel, or Muchil dicke (from the Anglo-Saxon *micel*, *mucel*, pronounced *mickle*, *muckle*), and, of course, meaning the great ditch. There was an estate in the neighbourhood called the Milk Wall Slade, and this name may have been a corruption of Mickle, or Muckle, into Milk-wall; but there is not the slightest warrant in old deeds and charters for the Nicker or Nicko Ditch; so that the Scandinavian myth must depart with the Danes themselves."—See *Lanc. Legends*, p. 28.

- (7.) Butterworth, Ed. 1842, p. 127.





ARMS OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.  
Gules, two lions passant guardant, or.

## The Norman Period.

### CHAPTER VI.

William the Conqueror—The Saxon Thane of Eston—Feudalism of William—Feud and Vassalage—Domesday Book—Greater and Lesser Barons—Homagers—Roger de Poitou—Albertus de Greslet—Ormeus Fitz-Ailward—Orme-Eston or Urmston—Roger Fitz-Orme de Assheton.

**A**LMOST simultaneously with the invasion of England by the Danes, France was subjected to a series of attacks by Northmen of the same language and birth. In 876, under the cover of darkness, on a bleak November night, Rollo, son of a daring Norwegian named Rögnwald, stepped on French soil at a place called Neustria. This place, afterwards wrung from Charles the Simple, was subsequently known as Normandy. The Norman power developed with such rapidity in France, that William, son of Robert the Devil, and the descendant of Rollo, the first Duke of Normandy, was enabled in less than two centuries from the above date, to invade England with 50,000 warriors. He defeated Harold in the battle of Hastings, October 14th, 1066; and so decisive was his victory, that he became complete

master of England; so much so, that the Anglo-Saxon policy and the Danish usurpation were alike laid prostrate, before the relentless power of this ruthless Northman.

Thereupon, William, being master of the situation, sought to establish himself on the English throne, and began to dispose of his new territory as he considered best, to strengthen his position and to make his power permanent. Being endowed with natural penetration, that indispensable faculty of all rulers, he was enabled to discern what was requisite to be done to subdue the influence of his Norman detractors, to quiet the opposition of the Saxons, and to secure the complete obedience of his subjects. First, he ordered the confiscation of all property held by those who were opposed to his rule; and as the feeling against the Conqueror was strong among the Saxon Thanes their opposition to his rule was also general and persistent, consequently the confiscation of their property was almost universal and entire. The Saxons who dared to resist his will or dispute his right were plundered of their property, and either reduced under the Norman system of villenage<sup>(1)</sup> to the condition of serfs, or were immediately despatched. Some of the Saxon Thanes, moved to submit, either by fear or selfishness, were allowed to some extent to retain their lands. Those who thus submitted to the Conqueror "are the mesne lords, denominated *drenches*<sup>(2)</sup> in the Domesday Book." We have already referred to the belief that the Ashton Old Hall now stands on the site of the habitation of the Thanes of Eston in Anglo-Saxon

(1.) VILLENAGE.—A great part of the population under the Anglo-Norman Kings was in a state of slavery, to which the name of villenage was given. Under the Normans most of the Saxon *ceorls*, were thrust into servitude, for the Anglo-Saxon *ceorls* became the villeins under their Norman rulers. Villeins were divided into two classes, called *villeins regardant* and *villeins in gross*. The former were *adscripti glebe*, or villeins attached to certain lands; so that when these lands changed owners the villeins regardant became the property of the new possessors. The *villeins in gross*, on the contrary, might be sold in open market, and transferred from hand to hand without regard to any land or settlement. They were called *en gros* because this term, in our legal phraseology, indicates property held absolutely, and without reference to any other. See Hume, p. 132, note. Also, Palgrave, *Hist. of Normandy and England*. Thierry, *Histoire de la Conquête de l'Angleterre par les Normands*.

(2.) *Drenches* were a sort of allodial tenants, between the freemen and the villeins, rendering services to the lord, but personally exempt from the performance of them, which were done by the villeins holding under them. Baines, *Hist. of Lanc.*, Vol. i., p. 27, Ed. 1868.

times: but after the Norman Conquest we find it no longer held by the Thanes of Eston, but in the possession of a family evidently of Norman extraction. It is supposed, therefore, that the Saxon Thane,<sup>(3)</sup> who resided at the time of the conquest in the hall, erected by his predecessors in the enclosed *tun* of Ashes, was one of a large number of Saxons who refused to recognise William as their ruler,<sup>(4)</sup> or to relinquish their holdings until compelled to do so by the superior strength of the Conqueror's arms. He scorned the thought of submitting to the arrogance and stern rigour of the upstart power of William. The *drenches* he despised as weaklings and miscreants; and inasmuch as his opposition was most persistent and determinate, he was deprived of his lands, which were bestowed upon others favourable to the Norman rule.

To show how the lands held by the Saxon Thanes of Eston came into the hands of the Asshetons it is necessary to take a brief glance at the system of tenure established by the Norman Conqueror; for the accession of William to the throne of England marks a new epoch in the history of our country, in which we get a reconstruction of society and its form of government.

William introduced a system of government already known in some parts of the continent as the *Feudal System*,<sup>(5)</sup> but he applied it in his new dominion with a distinctness and

(3.) SAXON THANE.—In the early period the two classes of society were called *eorls* and *ceorls*. The former signified the nobles and the latter the yeomen. Later the term *Thane* takes the place of the term *eorl*, and we find it used in contradistinction to the term *ceorl*. The term *thane*, A.S. *thegn*, from *thegnian*, signifies, to serve, minister. The Thanes were of different orders, the highest being called the King's thanes. Nobility in England first arose from service; but subsequently the hereditary possession of land produced a hereditary nobility; and at length became so much dependent upon property that the mere possession of five *hides* of land (about 600 acres), together with a chapel, a kitchen, a hall, and a bell, converted a *ceorl* into a *thane*; or a merchant who could make three voyages on his own account became a *thane*. The *thane* was liable to military service on horseback, and was, therefore, on a par with the *eques*, or knight. See Hallam's *Middle Ages*, vol. ii., pp. 360, 361. Hume's *Hist. of England*, p. 71, note. Also, *Hist. Anglo-Saxons*, Turner, &c.

(4.) *Hist. Ashton*. Butterworth. Ed. 1842. p. 12.

(5.) FEUDAL SYSTEM.—According to the generally received principle of feuds, the oath of the vassal was due only to the lord of whom he immediately held. But William exacted the oath of fealty from all landowners of England, as well those who held *in capite* as the under-tenants. Hence William's power was much greater than that of the feudal sovereigns of the continent; and the constitution approached more to an absolute despotism. See Hume, p. 129, note.

definition hitherto unknown. He originated the union of the feud<sup>(6)</sup> and vassalage, which was a new feature in the relation between grantor and grantee, but it was the natural evolution of the old system of feud. He granted large portions of his English territory to his nobles and to those who had rendered him any distinguished service. These became the great landowners of England and the King's vassals in consequence of their tenure. They rendered their fees<sup>(7)</sup> direct to their royal grantor, and were known as the tenants-in-chief of the Crown or tenants *in capite*; and were also styled the King's Barons. Those upon whom William bestowed his favours, were generally composed of three different classes of society. First, there were "the great ecclesiastics, the prelates and members of the Monastic institutions, whom he only allowed to retain, under a different species of tenure, what had been settled upon them by Saxon piety." Second, a few Saxons, called drenches, who submitted to his rule, who in a few instances were allowed to possess their lands under their new master. Third, foreigners, chiefly Normans, who had accompanied the King in his expedition, and had assisted him in

(6.) FEUD.—Has been derived by some from a Latin, by others from a Teutonic, root. The principal Latin origins proposed are *fœdus* a treaty, and *fides* faith. The chief Teutonic etymologies proposed have been from the old German *faida*, the Danish *feide*, or the modern German *vehd*, all meaning battle-feud, or dissension: and from *fe* or *fee*, which it is said signifies wages or pay for service, combined with *od* or *odh*, to which the signification of possession or property is assigned. But as Sir Francis Palgrave has well remarked, "Upon all the Teutonic etymologies it is sufficient to observe, that the theories are contradicted by the practice of the Teutonic tongues—a *Feud*, or *fief*, is not called by such a name, or by any name approaching thereto, in any Teutonic or Gothic language whatever." *Lehn* or some cognate form is the only corresponding Teutonic term; *Laen* in Anglo-Saxon, *Len* in Danish, *Leen* in Swedish, &c. All these words properly signify the same thing that is expressed by our modern English form of the same element, *Loan*; a loan is the only name for a feud or fief in all Teutonic tongues. What then is *feud* or *fief*? Palgrave doubts if the word *Feudum* ever existed. The true word seems to be *Fevum*, not distinguishable from *Feudum* in old writing, or *feftum*. *Fiev* or *Fief*, (Latinized into *Fevodium*, which some contracted into *Fevdum*, and others, by omitting the *v*, into *Feodum*), he conceives to be *Fitef*, or *Phitef*, and that again to be a colloquial abbreviation of *Emphyteusis*, pronounced *Emphytefsis*, a well known term of the Roman imperial law for an *Estate granted to be held not absolutely, but with the ownership still in the grantor and the usufruct only in the hands of the grantee*. See "Proofs and Illustrations to Rise and Progress of Eng. Com., p. ccvii., also cciv., ccvi., by Sir Francis Palgrave." It may be added that the word *Few* is still in familiar use in Scotland for an estate held only for term of years. The possessor of such an estate is called a *Fear*. See Erskine's "Principles of the Law of Scotland," also, "Political Cyclop.," vol. iii., p. 17.

(7.) FEES.—The English term *fee*, is generally, if not universally assumed to be the same word as *fief* and *feud*. It may be the abbreviated form of the words *feoffor*, *infeoff*, and *feoffment*. See *Cyclo. Pol.*, Bohn Series, vol. iii.

obtaining the throne of England. The latter "were by far the most numerous class of the Conqueror's beneficiaries."

As soon as the distribution of the land had been fully carried out, the King ordered a general survey to be made of the demesne lands of the King, and all lands granted to ecclesiastical corporations, or private persons; and "so very narrowly did he commission them to trace it out, that there was not one single hide<sup>(8)</sup> or yard<sup>(9)</sup> of land; nay, moreover, not even an ox, nor a cow, nor a swine, was there left that was not set down." The way this edict was carried into operation was as follows:—"Persons called the King's justiciaries were appointed, who, either in person or by deputy, visited the greater part of the country, and from the oaths of the sheriff, the lord of each manor, the priest of each church, the reeve of each hundred, and the bailiff and six villeins of each vill, obtained the particulars of the name of each place, who held it in the time of Edward the Confessor, who was the present holder, its extent, the number of tenants of each class, bond and free, the homagers of each manor, the extent of wood, meadow, and pasture, the mills and ponds, the gross value in King Edward's time, and whether any advance could be made in the value." The result of this survey is recorded in what is known as the Domesday Book,<sup>(10)</sup> the most ancient record of the realm. From it we learn, to some extent, to whom the King first granted lands, also who were the King's barons, and what was the location of the lands held; it also gives us some idea of their early position and influence.

(8.) HIDE.—The hide seems to have varied in its contents. Some passages in the Domesday Book appear to make it contain 120 acres, but others make it less. See Reilly, *Hist. Manc.*, p. 32, note.

(9.) YARD.—Probably a quarter of an acre. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

(10.) DOMESDAY BOOK.—The register of the land laws made by order of William in 1086, sometimes called Rotulus Wintoniæ. It was the book upon which judgment was given upon the value, tenures, and services of lands described therein. In the original it comprises two large volumes—one a *large folio* of 382 pages, in a small hand; the other a *quarto* of 450 pages, in a larger one. The authority of this work was never allowed to be called into question—there was no appeal from it, hence some suppose its name. It is preserved in the Chapter House of the Church at Westminster. Hence some derive its name from *Domus Dei*. In questions relating to tenure, the Conqueror himself often submitted to it; and for a long time after the conquest no one was permitted to make claim or title to lands previous to the period of that event. This work has some time ago been published at the expense of the Government.



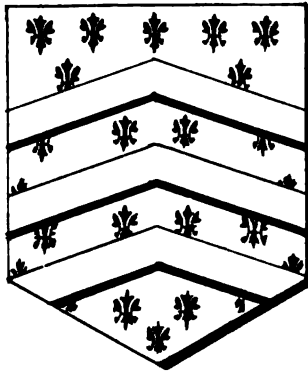
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In the first instance the tenants-in-chief, including the ecclesiastical corporations, who held lands immediately from the King, amounted scarcely to 1,400 in number. These tenants, according to the extent and value of the lands they held, were compelled to render to the King "services or money, not as an annual rent, but as the King might direct." For instance, they were bound "to give personal service to the King in time of war, and to furnish according to the extent of their lands, a certain number of men for the royal army. They were also at times to attend the King's court to acknowledge their allegiance and transact business; to assist in the administration of justice and perform certain duties in his household; to keep a certain number of horses, hounds, and hawks for the King's use and pleasure." Some of these tenants-in-chief, called the King's barons, held lands "which embraced entire counties, others a single manor, or several manors which were adjacent. The result was, that these great barons who held lands which exceeded entire counties, sublet, or *subinfeuded*, as it was called, portions of their land to minors; who were responsible to their grantors as the tenants-in-chief were responsible to the King." Thus arose the distinction between what were known as the Greater and Lesser Barons, the latter being only barons of the King's barons. Hence, "as the greater barons had to furnish a quota of men when the King called upon them, so they required their tenants to furnish men

equipped for military service proportionate to the extent of land held by them ; just as they had to perform civil services of various kinds for the King, so they appointed certain services to be performed by their tenants to themselves. As they had to do homage from time to time to the King, and attend his court for the administration of justice and other business touching the common interest, so they required the presence of their tenants to acknowledge their subjection to them, 'and to assist in the administration of public justice which the Sovereign allowed the greater tenants to administer."

The castles, the ruins of which exist in so many parts of the country, were the seats of these greater barons, where they held their courts, received the homage of their tenants, the lesser barons, and "were to the surrounding *homagers*<sup>(11)</sup> what Westminster Hall was to the greater barons."

We have now sufficiently glanced at the system of feud and vassalage, originated in England by William, to explain what follows respecting the Manor<sup>(12)</sup> of Ashton and its relation to the barony and Manor of Manchester.



ARMS OF DE POICTOU.

Erms. 3 chevrons gules.

- (11.) HOMAGERS.—From *Homo*, a man. The term arose from the homage the barons were compelled to pay to the King, as tenants-in-chief, as part of their fee to him ; and on the homage which the lesser barons had to pay to the greater barons. The tenants-in-chief were the King's men, his *homines* or *homagers* ; so the lesser barons were their *homines* or *homagers*.
- (12.) MANOR.—Manor, from *Manerium*, a place for remaining or dwelling in ; the jurisdiction of a Court Baron. At the time of the Norman conquest it signified a large mansion or

Sometime subsequent to the establishment of the Norman power, and in full accordance with the system of feud and vassalage, we learn that William "the Conqueror gave to Roger de Poictou,<sup>(13)</sup> one of his followers, the hundreds of Amounderness, Lonsdale, and Furness, and the extensive tract of country between the Ribble and the Mersey." Being lord paramount of this wide area of country, "he fixed his seat at Lancaster, and assigned estates in different parts of the county to several of his companions in arms, who thus became lords of manors, which they in their turn gave to tenants or vassals, who held from them, as they held from the lord paramount." Some have supposed that Roger de Poictou conferred upon Albertus de Greslet<sup>(14)</sup> the Parish of Manchester, of which Ashton formed a part. Edwin Butterworth is inclined to believe so, for he says:—"Roger de Poictou was paramount lord of the land betwixt the Ribble and Mersey, and afterwards of all Lancashire: he may be said to have been the founder of the great Barony, Earldom, and Duchy of Lancaster. Of his lesser barons<sup>(15)</sup> was Albert Grelle (Albertus de Greslet), who held in fee the barony and parish of Manchester, to which the manor and chapel of Ashton-under-Lyne were appurtenant." Others assert that Roger de Poictou rebelled against his sovereign towards the close of the Conqueror's reign, in consequence of which he lost his possessions. Again, Rufus restored

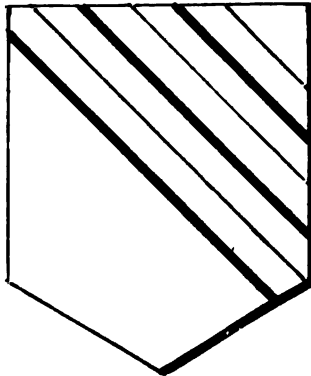
dwelling. Subsequently it derived its meaning from the subinfeudation of the system introduced by the Duke of Normandy. A manor, therefore, originally consisted of lands in demesne, upon which the lord had a mansion, and more especially to the latter there was appendant a seigniorship over freeholders qualified in respect of quantity of estate (*i.e.* by tenancy for life at least, if not tenancy in fee-simple), and sufficient in point of number to constitute a Court Baron.

(13.) Also styled Rogerius Pictavensis.

(14.) Albertus de Greslet, also known by the following variations of the same name, Albert Grelle, Albert Grelley, or Gresley.

(15.) **BARON.**—Spelman regards the word baron as a corruption of the Latin *vir*, a man; but it is a distinct Latin word, used by Cicero, for instance, and the supposition of corruption is therefore unnecessary. The Spanish word *baron*, and the Portuguese *barao* are slightly varied forms. The radical points of *vir* and *baro* are probably the same. B and V are convertible letters, as we observe in the forms of various words. The word *barones*, also written *berones*, first occurs, as far as is known, in the book entitled *De Bello Alexandrino*, cap. 53, where barones are mentioned among the guards of Cassius Longinus in Spain. The Roman writers used the word *baro* in a disparaging sense; but this may not have been the primary meaning of the word, which might simply mean *man*. See for fuller discussion, Spelman, *Glossarium*, 1626, *Voce Baro*. Selden's, *Titles of Honour*, 4to, Ed. Bohn's *Ref. Lib.*, vol. i., 304.

them to him, but during the reign of Henry I., Roger took part with his brother against the King, and being defeated, was deprived of his estates and banished the realm in 1102.<sup>(16)</sup> Hence says Reilly:—"On the defection of Roger de Poictou, a large tract of land was granted to Albertus de Greslet." But whether it was granted to Albertus de Greslet by Roger de Poictou, or not, it is clear that Albertus de Greslet was the first baron of Manchester. This has the support of Kuerden, who informs us that Albertus de Greslet was not only the first baron of Manchester but that he was also a favourite with Roger de Poictou. So far, then, we have determined the two following points, *first*, that William the Conqueror granted that tract of country which embraced Ashton, to Roger de Poictou: *second*, that either Roger de Poictou or some other grantor, subinfeuded Manchester, including Ashton, to Albertus de Greslet, the first baron of Manchester.



ARMS OF GRELLE.  
Gules, three bends enhanced, or.

How then did Ashton pass into the hands of the Asshetons? There are several explanations given in answer to this question. Edwin Butterworth says that:—"Robertus Grelle (Greslet) has been represented as the first Norman grantee from Roger of Poictou, but this now appears to be incorrect."<sup>(17)</sup> He held the opinion

(16.) *Hist. Manch.*, Reilly, pp. 35, 36.

(17.) If the reference here is to James Butterworth, the writer has clearly mistaken his meaning, for James Butterworth does not refer to Robertus Grelle, but to Robertus or Rogerius son of Ormeus. See Ed. 1823, p. 13; Ed. 1827, p. 12.

that Ormeus Fitz-Ailward obtained Ashton as part of the marriage grant with Emma, daughter of Albertus Greslet, the elder. The reference is to the following effect:—"Emma, the daughter of Albert, married Ormeus Fitz-Eward or Ailward, on whom Albert settled Eston as part of the marriage portion, to be held by him as superior lord;" and adds, "At the time of making the inquisition which was the basis of the Testa de Nevill, it was found that the land in Eston acquired by Orm in this marriage was a carucate;"<sup>(18)</sup> and it is held by Orm and his heirs on condition of yielding a rent of ten shillings per annum to the Baron of Manchester."<sup>(19)</sup> The passage upon which he founds his opinion, is taken from Kuerden's Testa de Nevill, forming as he thinks "the first notice of the manor after the conquest," the Domesday Book being silent on this matter. The reference is as follows:—

"Albtus Gredle senior dedit Orm fil' Eward à filia sua Emma in maritag' una caruc' Tre' in Eston p xs. p anru heredes ipsius Orm' tenent Tram illam."<sup>(20)</sup>

But there is reason to believe that Edwin Butterworth has misapplied the above quotation, and has therefore been mistaken as to the first grantee of Ashton. Reilly, referring to the same passage in the Testa de Nevill, makes the following observation upon it:—"The youngest daughter, Emma, was the wife of Orme Fitz-Ailward, and on her marriage with him received one knight's fee in Walton, Parbold, Wrightington, which then became sub-feodary to the Manor of Manchester, and also one carucate in Eston, for ten shillings annually;" and continues, quoting the opinion of Dr. Ormerod upon the latter portion of this statement, "According to Dr. Ormerod, the historian of Cheshire, *this Eston is the same as Orme-Eston, now Urmston, in the parish of Flixton.*"<sup>(21)</sup>

(18.) CARUCATE.—The carucate, vigate, and acre seem to have varied in their contents. A carucate has had various meanings applied to it, and its extent, no doubt, depended much on the nature and character of the soil. It meant a certain measure of ploughed or cultivated land, probably about 120 acres. See Reilly, *Note*, p. 32. *East Cheshire Earwaker*, vol. I., p. 422, *note*.

(19.) *Hist. Ashton*, Butterworth, pp. 12, 13, Ed. 1842.

(20.) *Testa de Nevill*, p. 404.

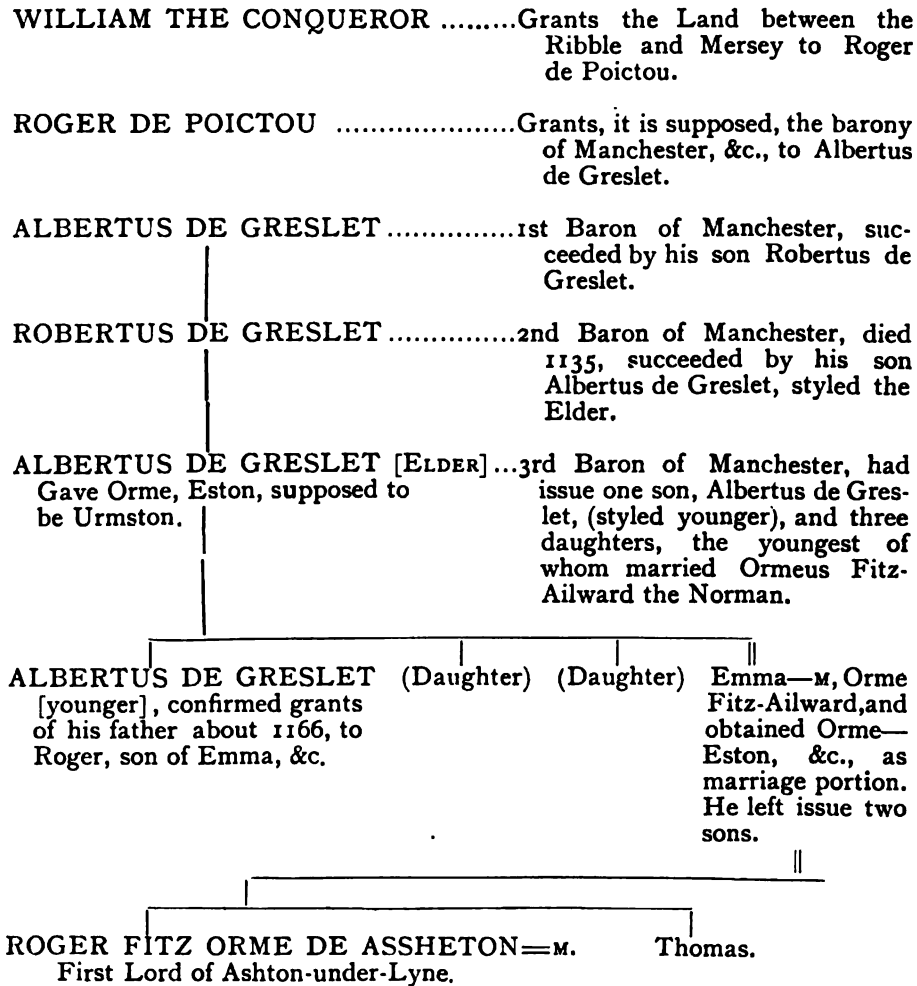
(21.) *Hist. Manc.*, Reilly, p. 42.

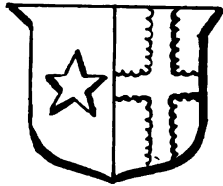
This militates most seriously against the supposition of Edwin Butterworth. We, therefore, venture another opinion upon the matter, which to us appears most probable, and in the absence of any direct statement to the contrary, it has the advantage and support of evidence of a circumstantial nature, amounting to the strongest presumption in its favour. James Butterworth referring to the barony and manor of Manchester held at that time by the Greslets, writes:—"In time this was still further divided; for Albertus [the elder], the son of Robert de Grelle [Greslet], gave all the land of Assheton, to Rogerius or Robert, the son of Orme the Norman, who held the same by fealty, and the annual payment of one penny to the lord of the Manor of Manchester."<sup>(22)</sup> Hence it would appear, First, that Albertus de Greslet the elder, son of Robert de Greslet, gave to Ormeus Fitz-Ailward on his marriage with his daughter Emma "one knight's fee in Walton, Parbold, and Wrightington; also, one carucate in Eston" [Urmston]. Second, That Ormeus Fitz-Ailward had issue by Emma a son called Rogerius, [Roger] or Robertus [Robert], and that Albertus de Greslet, granted Assheton to him—probably during the lifetime of his father, Ormeus—who held the same by fealty; and further that on the decease of his father Ormeus, he succeeded to the whole or greater portion of his father's estates. This supposition seems also to have the support of Edwin Butterworth, for in another place he writes—"His [Ormeus's] eldest son, Robert or Roger de Assheton, sometimes styled de Wrightington, received from Albertus Juvenis Grelle, a confirmation of the grant of Albertus, senior, of a carucate of Assheton [Eston]; and also a grant in fee of *all Assheton*."<sup>(23)</sup> Roger, son of Ormeus Fitz-Ailward the Norman, by Emma, youngest daughter of Albertus de Greslet, appears therefore to have been the first lord of the Manor of Ashton-under-Lyne after the Norman conquest; and is therefore styled on that account Roger Fitz-Orm de Ashton, or Assheton.

(22.) *Hist. Ashton*, Butterworth, Ed. 1823, p. 13, Ed. 1827, p. 12.

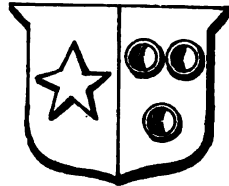
(23.) *Ibid.*, pp. 13, 14, Ed. 1842.

### Table Illustrative of Chapter vi.

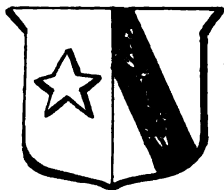




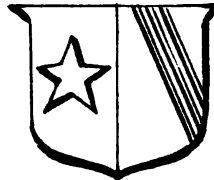
ASHTON, arg. a mullet sa.  
impaling LEON, gu. a cross arg.



ASHTON impaling STANDISH,  
az. 3 dishes arg.

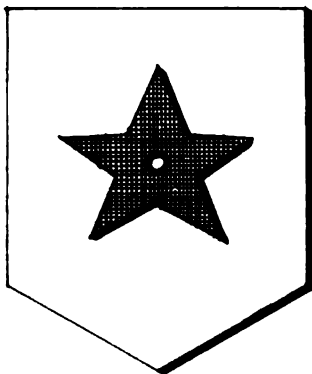


ASHTON, impaling SAVILE, arg.  
on a bend sa. 3 owls of the field.



ASHTON impaling BYRON,  
arg. 3 bendlets enhanced gu.





ARMS OF ASHTON OR ASSHETON.

Main lino—Argent, a mullet  
pierced, sable.

## The Asshetons of Ashton.



### CHAPTER VII.

Ormeus Fitz Ailward—Roger Fitz Orme de Assheton—Sir Thomas de Assheton—Sir John de Assheton, his Covenant with his Tenants—Sir Robert de Assheton, Courtier and Counsellor—Thomas de Assheton, the hero of Neville Cross—Sir John de Assheton, his supposed wonderful feat—Sir John de Assheton—Sir John de Assheton, his Rent Roll, &c.—Sir Thomas de Assheton the Alchemist, the Philosopher's Stone—Sir John Assheton—Sir Thomas Assheton, last of the line.

**O**RMEUS FITZ-AILWARD is regarded as the progenitor of the knightly race of Assheton, whose descendants on the female side have nearly attained the summit of the English nobility. Among the manorial lords of Ashton there are some who have occupied the highest places of trust in the history of our country. Some of the descendants of Ormeus have boasted of the greatest deeds of valour, and have evinced a most self-sacrificing spirit to maintain the honour of England and the glory of her arms. For a considerable time after the Norman conquest, little of a very reliable nature is known of the successors of Ormeus. It is not until we come to the 9th year of Edward the Third

[1335] that we find any information of a very definite character. "From a very careful and critical examination," says Baines, "of the original evidence, Dr. Ormerod, the historian of Cheshire, has shown that the Manor of Ashton was not really held by an Assheton, by any known authentic deed, before the charter of free warren in 9 Edward III. [1335]." By an indenture dated 1413, it is stated that the manor, then held by Sir John de Assheton, was held in 1283 immediately from the Lords of Manchester, not by the Asshetons, but by the ancestors of Sir Richard de Kirkeby. But we must remember that the conditions of tenure varied very much in different times and under different circumstances. In the first instance Ashton was held by annual payment of ten shillings to the Lord of Manchester; and again in the 13th year of the reign of Henry IV. Sir John de Assheton was found holding the manor of Ashton, with its appurtenances, by fealty, and the service of rendering annually twenty-two shillings, and a contribution called *putura*, &c. Hence, on account of the varied conditions of tenure there has been great confusion in the records of the family, and consequently great uncertainty has existed in the minds of local historians when referring to the first three generations of the descendants of Ormeus. But for the completion of the pedigree it is necessary for us to reproduce certain statements concerning the earlier portions of this family, even though, in some instances, it is admitted that they are not more than conjectures, drawn from evidence of a circumstantial nature rather than statements of authentic history.

Through the marriage of Ormeus Fitz-Ailward with Emma, daughter of Albertus de Greslet, the Asshetons traced their ancestry back to the first barons of the great city of Manchester, and were by the same union undoubtedly of Norman extraction. Ormeus, distinguished by many valiant deeds, was held in great repute among the minors of the Great Barons of Manchester, and gained the esteem of Albertus de Greslet; and as we have already seen, won the hand of his daughter in marriage. He transmitted to his descendants the same ardent chivalrous spirit, by which

he himself had been inspired, and which burned at times with a fervent desire to excel in deeds of gallantry. The date of his marriage with Emma de Greslet is uncertain, as is also the date of his death. He left two sons, first Roger, styled in some pedigrees Robertus or Robert, second Thomas. Roger, his son and heir, is supposed to have been the first lord of the Manor of Assheton, and is consequently styled Roger Fitz-Orme de Assheton.

ROGER FITZ<sup>(1)</sup>-ORME DE ASSHETON, on the decease of his father, and in full accordance with the feudal custom of his day, received from his uncle, Albertus de Greslet, junior, a confirmation of the grant made to Ormeus by his grandfather Albertus, senior, namely, a carucate of land in Eston, also of a grant in fee of all Eston [Assheton].<sup>(2)</sup> Roger, "inspired by the piety of his age," gave to God, St. Mary, and the Abbey of Cockersand, his lands in Nuthurst;<sup>(3)</sup> and according to a deed without date, Thomas the second son of Ormeus, in conjunction with his father, or by his consent, also gave lands to Robert de Buron (Byron), *pro homagio et servicio*.<sup>(4)</sup> These lands, says Baines, were probably in Ashton [Eston], for Sir John Byron, years after, was found to have 2s. rent in "*Assheton subtus Limam*."<sup>(5)</sup>

Sir THOMAS DE ASSHETON is the next we come to in the pedigree, and is reputed to have been the son of Roger Fitz-Orme de Assheton,<sup>(6)</sup> but this is a matter of grave uncertainty. He is regarded as the first knight of the line. He is supposed to have left two sons, Robert and Gilbert. James Butterworth, for instance, held this opinion, but that he was labouring under some misunderstanding, and confused Robert, son of John, with this imaginary person is clear from the context.<sup>(7)</sup> Baines differs from him, and distinctly declares in his pedigree of the Assheton family that Robert and Gilbert were the children of Sir John de Assheton.<sup>(8)</sup>

(1.) FITZ.—Prefix, signifying son, a Norman designation.

(2.) Testa de Nevill, p. 404. Also Dr. Kuerden's MSS., fo. 262. (3.) Kuerden's MSS., fo. 214.

(4.) MS. without date, in the possession of the Rector of Middleton, 1617. Cited by Edwin Butterworth. (5.) Baines' *Hist. of Lanc.*, vol. ii., p. 535, Ed. 1836. (6.) Kuerden, small vol., p. 54. (7.) *Hist. of Ashton*, p. 14, Ed. 1823; p. 12, Ed. 1827.

(8.) *Hist. of Lanc.*, Baines, p. 532, Ed. 1836.

Sir JOHN DE ASSHETON we next meet with, about whose position as manorial lord of Ashton there can be little doubt. He was summoned to parliament, or rather the great council, in the 17th year of the reign of Edward the Second. On the 27th August, 1335, we find him chartered to have "free warren" in his demesne land in Ashton.<sup>(9)</sup> He married Margery, daughter of Sir John Byron, who is described as a widow, having been married before to Sir Edmund Talbot,<sup>(10)</sup> who died about 1344.<sup>(11)</sup> Sir John left a son named Robert, who was greatly distinguished, and held many important offices in the State; and became a great favourite both with Edward the Third and the council during the minority of Richard the Second. It is supposed, also, that he left a son named Gilbert.

Sir ROBERT DE ASSHETON, designated "Courtier and Counsellor," was, as we have seen, the son of Sir John above. According to some historians he was returned to parliament in the year 1324,<sup>(12)</sup>—which would be about the same time his father was summoned to the council,—and to his return as a member of parliament is attributed his good fortune. There can be little doubt about the character he bore. Being a gentleman of most pleasing manners and kindly spirit, a faithful and trustworthy servant, and withal courageous, he not only endeared himself

(9.) Rot. Chart. Par. Unic. M., 23. Cited by Edwin Butterworth, Ed. 1842, p. 31.

(10.) Whitaker's Craven, p. 25.

(11.) There are a number of fines of an early date, relating to the lands and messuages in this Manor, preserved in the Chapter-House Record Office: *vide* Brundel, Rot. Ped. Finium de com. Lanc. temps. Ed. III. In the first year of the Duchy of Lancaster, 25, Ed. III., John de Radcliffe, senior, is entered as plaintiff in a suit at law, against Hugh de Toft and Alicia his wife, deforcements of the property in Ashton, which William de Moston held: the issue is not recorded. In the fourth year of the duchy, 29th, Ed. III., John de Radcliff, parson of the church of Bury, appeared as plaintiff against John de Asshelegh and Ellen his wife, deforcements of messuages and lands in Ashton. The result of this suit is also unknown. [Baines' 4to., vol. ii., p. 435.] (In 29th, Ed. III., this John de Radcliff paid a rent of half-a-mark to Henry, Duke of Lancaster, for lands in Assheton-under-Lyne.) Butterworth, Ed., 1842, p. 15, *note*. It is also stated that Robert de Holland held part of Knight's fee in Walton, Parbold, &c., that was anciently the Asshefons. In Gregson's Fragments of Lancashire, p. 4, it is said, that Robert Holland received Assheton by gift of Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, to whom he afterwards proved faithful. Robert de Holland appears to have been only authorised to receive the services due from Assheton to Thomas Plantagenet, as Earl of Lancaster. See *Hist. of Ashton*, Ed. Butterworth, p. 30, Ed. 1842.

(12.) *Hist. of Ashton*, Butterworth, Ed. 1842, p. 15.

to his lord, but won the patronage and esteem of his royal master, Edward the Third, and the respect of his advisers. His devotion to business and loyalty to the King during the eventful period in which he lived were first rewarded by an appointment he received on the 15th of May, 1359,<sup>(13)</sup> to the governorship of "Guynes," near Calais. Four years subsequent to this he received another appointment of still greater responsibility, for in 1363<sup>(14)</sup> he was made Lord Treasurer of England. The administration of the finances of the nation in those stirring and troublous times was sufficient to tax the strength and tact of a giant intellect; yet we are not conversant with any statement which suggests that he was not equal to the contingencies and difficulties attending his office. In his capacity as Lord Treasurer, we find him witnessing a charter granted to Edmund de Langele. Again in 1368<sup>(15)</sup> he obtained a grant of the Castle of Sandgate, near Calais. The following year 1369,<sup>(16)</sup> he was Admiral of the Narrow Seas. In 1372<sup>(17)</sup> he received the highly responsible position of Justiciary of Ireland, but obtained his discharge in the following year. In 1373<sup>(18)</sup> he was the Treasurer of Exchequer, and the year following Vice Chamberlain to the King. Edward, who now began to feel the result of a life partly spent in the pursuits of war, and partly in self indulgence, saw that the end was not far distant; and so great was his confidence in this statesman that he appointed Sir Robert, along with John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, King of Castile and Leon; also Sir Robert Beauchamp, and other persons of great quality, "to act as grantees in trust of divers manors, rents and reversions, purchased in Kent by the King, to enfeof therewith the Abbey of St. Mary-le-Grace;"<sup>(19)</sup> also to act as one of the executors to his last will and testament in 1377.

Richard the Second, son of the Black Prince, now came to the throne, and being only eleven years of age, the House of Commons appointed a council to conduct the affairs of the nation.

(13.) *Hist. of Ashton*, Butterworth, Ed. 1842.

(14.) 37, Ed. III. (15.) 42, Ed. III. (16.) 43, Ed. III. (17.) 46, Ed. III. (18.) 47, Ed. III.

(19.) 50, Ed. III. *Hist. of Ashton*, James Butterworth, p. 14, Ed. 1823. See also Dugdale, *Mon. Ang.*, p. 944.

The esteem in which Sir Robert was held by the King and his advisers, obtained for him in 1381<sup>(20)</sup>—the same year that Wat Tyler with the rebellious populace assembled on Blackheath and menaced the government—the appointment of Constable of Dover Castle and Warden of the Cinque Ports for life.<sup>(21)</sup> It has been asserted, but on what authority we know not, that he was “*Nuper defunctus*” this same year; but this is evidently a mistake. He died in 1384, and was interred in the church of Dover Castle, which had benefited by his munificence, he being the donor of its largest bell, as appears by this inscription, cast in metal around the circumference:—*Dominus Robertus de Ashetone miles me fecit fieri, Anno quarto Richardi Secundi.*<sup>(22)</sup> A marble slab was in existence not long ago, upon which was “his portraiture as a knight, inlaid in brass,” and the following inscription:—

“*Hic jacet Robertus Asheton, myles quondam constabularius Castri Dourie, et custos quinque Portuum, qui obiit nono die Januar. Anno Domini millesimo CCC. octogesimo quarto, cujus anime propitiatur Deus. Amen.*”<sup>(23)</sup>

He married first, Elizabeth, but whose daughter she was does not appear. Second Philippa, relict of Matthew de Gorney,<sup>(24)</sup> who after the decease of Robert,<sup>(25)</sup> married Sir John Tiptoft, Knt., and died May 3rd, 1417. He left issue by his first wife, Thomas and William, the latter is described as Doctor of Laws to the “Serene Prince Lord John, King of Castile and Leon.” Some

(20.) 4. Rich. II. Weaver's Fun. Monuments, p. 268.

(21.) A copy of the grant constituting him Constable of Dover Castle and Warden of the Five Ports, and the salary at that time attached to it is contained in Weaver, and is cited at length in the Transactions of the Lanc. Antq. Soc., part I., p. 13, as follows:—“*Rex omnibus, &c., salutem. Concessimus post sursum reddicionem, Sol mundi comitis Cantabr. dilecto et fideli nostro Roberto de Ashton, constabularium Castri Douer, ac custodiam quinque Portuum, habend. et custodiend. cum omnibus et singulis, ad easdem Constabularium et custodiam, qualitercunque spectantibus, siue pertinentibus ad totam vitam ipsius Roberti, adeo plene et integre, sicut aliqui alij Constabularij, et custodes portuum eorundem Constabul. et custod. illas ante hec tempora ex concessione nostra habuerunt, seu tenerunt. Principiend. pro Constabular. et custodia predictis, pro sustentacione [sic] sua nec non Capellanorum seruientium, et vigiliam, ac vnius Carpentarij in dicto Castro Commorantium, CCC. per annum, juxta ratam temporis: videlicet de Wardis. T. R. apud Westm. 1 Feb. R. Ann. 4. Re Ric 2 pat. 2 Memb. 28.—Fun. Mon. p. 268.*”

(22.) In the *Magna Britannia*, 4to. Ed., 1720, it is stated that these bells were begged by Sir George Rook, and by him given to the town of Portsmouth. Transactions of Lanc. Antq. Soc., p. 12.

(23.) See Baines, vol. ii., p. 539, Ed. 1836; also, *Hist. of Ashton*, E. Butterworth, Ed. 1842, p. 16.

(24.) Inquisition. Kuerden MSS. 4. A.

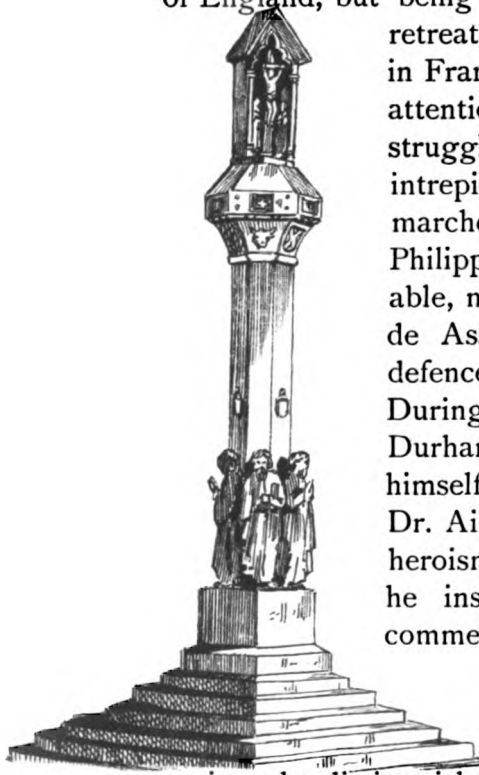
(25.) The Record of the Extent of Manchester Manor in Kuerden's MSS., fo. 274. (See Baines' 4to., vol. ii, p. 182) states Robert de Ashton to hold of the lord, for the term of his life, two bovates in Denton.

historians say he left a daughter Eleanor, who married one John Berkley, Esq., and others contend that he had a son named Henry, who is supposed to have signed the treaty of peace between Edward III. and King John of France on the 8th of May, 1360, but there is some doubt as to this relationship. Sir Robert was succeeded by his son Thomas.

THOMAS DE ASSHETON inherited from his father an indomitable spirit, by which he was distinguished in his youth in military circles. Amidst the confusion which settled upon the nation in the beginning of the reign of the juvenile prince, Edward the Third, the Scots marched into the northern counties of England, but being repulsed after a desperate struggle, they

retreated. In 1346, while the King was absent in France and the siege of Calais absorbed his attention, the Scots once more returned to the struggle, under the command of their valiant and intrepid leader, David Bruce. They had already marched into Northumberland, when the Queen, Philippa, getting together what troops she was able, marched to oppose their advance. Thomas de Assheton fought under the Queen for the defence of the throne and the honour of England. During the engagement at Neville's Cross, near Durham, Thomas, still a youth, distinguished himself by capturing the royal standard of Scotland. Dr. Aikin states that he was knighted for his heroism on this occasion, and is of opinion that he instituted the riding the Black Lad to commemorate this event.<sup>(26)</sup> Even Baines fell

into the same dilemma,<sup>(27)</sup> for in one place he observes, that the King knighted Ashton and Coupland, another Lancashire squire, who distinguished himself in the battle; but Baines on the



(26.) Aikin's *Hist. of Manc.*, vol. i., p. 224, Ed. 1795.

(27.) Baines' *Hist. of Lanc.*, 12mo., vol. i., p. 491.

authority of Rymer's *Fœdera*,<sup>(28)</sup> corrects the error, he being termed esquire forty years after this period. Coupland undoubtedly received the honour.<sup>(29)</sup>

The next reference to Thomas de Assheton is in connection with John, Duke of Lancaster. John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, married for his second wife the eldest daughter of Peter, King of Castile, and when the brother of Peter took possession of the throne, John of Gaunt set up a counter claim by virtue of his marriage; and in 1385 he set out to make his claim good. Thomas de Assheton, attached to the cause of the Duke of Lancaster, formed one of his retinue, and obtained from Richard the Second "letters of permission and protection to accompany John of Gaunt into Spain,"<sup>(30)</sup> on his fruitless expedition.

He is supposed to have been married, but the name of his lady is omitted in the genealogies of the family. He left an only son, who succeeded him, and is known as Sir John de Assheton, Knt.

Sir JOHN DE ASSHETON, KNT., was Knight of the Shire for the County of Lancaster, in the 6th, 12th, and 13th years of the reign of Richard the Second. He is supposed to have possessed a most daring spirit, and to have performed deeds of the greatest courage, one of which partakes very much of that exaggeration with which, there is reason to suspect, so many stories of valour in those times are coloured. If the story be correct, he was most certainly a very cool and daring person to say the least. But unfortunately for many writers who have ascribed such gallantry to him, there is one letter in difference in the spelling of the name; hence others have thought that the story does not refer to any of the Asshetons, but that most probably it is Sir John de Seton that is referred to; and again, if the translator of Froissart be correct it is questionable if the name of Assheton will fit in with the context. But as so many historians<sup>(31)</sup> have referred this gallant performance to Sir John de Assheton, we subjoin the

(28.) Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. vii., p. 490; vol. ix., p. 425.

(29.) *Hist. of Lanc.*, Baines, 4to., vol. ii., 539. (30.) Rymer's *Fœdera*, tom. ix., p. 425.

(31.) See Baines, James Butterworth, also Edwin, &c., editions 1823, 1827, 1842, &c.



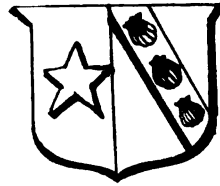
account as given by Thomas Jones, Esq., in his translations of Froissart's Chronicles, so that the reader will see at once how easy it is to be mistaken, and can form his own opinion on the matter.

"There was a Scot's Knight in the English Army who performed a most gallant deed of arms. He quitted his troop, with his lance in its rest, and mounted on his courser, followed only by his page; when, striking his spurs into his horse, he was soon up the mountain and at the barriers. The name of this knight was Sir John de *Assueton*, a very valiant and noble man, perfectly master of his profession. When he was arrived at the barrier of Noyon, he dismounted, and giving his horse to his page, said, 'Quit not this place,' then grasping his spear, he advanced to the barriers, and leaped over them. There were on the inside some good knights of that country, such as Sir John de Roye, Sir Launcelot de Lorris, and ten or twelve others, who were astonished at this action, and wondered what he would do next; however they received him well. The Scot's knight addressing them, said, 'Gentlemen, I am come to see you; for as you do not vouchsafe to come out beyond your barriers, I condescend to visit you. I wish to try my knighthood against yours, and you will conquer me if you can.' After this, he gave them many grand strokes with his lance, which they returned him. He continued in this situation alone against them all, skirmishing and fighting most gallantly, upwards of an hour. He wounded one or two of the knights; and they had so much pleasure in this combat they frequently forgot themselves. The inhabitants looked from above the gates and top of the walls with wonder. They might have done him much hurt with their arrows, if they had so willed; but no, the French knights had forbidden it. Whilst thus engaged, his page came close to the barriers, mounted on his courser, and said to him aloud, in his own language, 'My lord, you had better come away: it is time, for our army is on its march.' The knight, who heard him, made ready to follow his advice; and after he had given two or three thrusts to clear his way, he leaped again over the barriers without any hurt, and armed as he was, jumped up behind the page on his courser. When he was thus mounted, he said to the French, 'Adieu, gentlemen, many thanks to you,' and spurring his steed, soon rejoined his companions. This gallant feat of Sir John *Assueton* was highly prized by all manner of persons."<sup>(32)</sup>

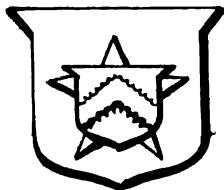
(32.) Sir John Froissart's *Chronicles of Eng., France, and Spain*, tom. i., p. 363; also, the translations of Froissart's Chron. by Thomas Jones, Esq., vol. i., p. 448, Ed. 1874. It is supposed by some that the translator of Froissart, not perceiving that his author everywhere styles those who served in the Scottish part of the army, *chevaliers Escocas*, conjectures that *Messire Jehan de Assueton* is a mistake for Sir John de Seton. Froissart naturally enough supposed that the follower of "messire Robert de Conolles" was as much a Scotsman as his leader. See note in Transactions of Lanc. Antiq. Soc., p. 13.



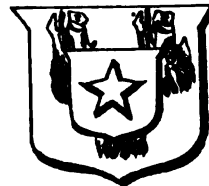
ASHTON impaling TRAFFORD;  
arg. a griffin segreant gu.



ASHTON impaling ELLAND; arg.  
on a bend gu. 3 escallops or.



ASHTON, on an escutcheon of  
pretence STALEY; arg. a chev.  
engr. az.



BOOTH, arg. 3 boars' heads, erased  
and erect az. on an escutcheon of  
pretence ASHTON.

John de Assheton was living about 1380, and made a covenant with his tenants to the following effect :—

“ This covenant made between John of Assheton, Knight, and the Tenants of the Town of Assheton, of their swine, the year of King Richard the Second after the conquest, the third, that the aforesaid Tenants shall have their swine going in the Demesnes of the aforesaid Town. Fro the latter end of Harvest unto Sowing time out taken (except) the *little Parke* and *Hall-yards*, so that the aforesaid swine be ringed fro the foresaid latter end of Harvest unto the foresaid time of Sowing. And the aforesaid Tenants shall keep them, that they do no harm to the Lord, nor to his neighbours, in the time out taken, that is to say, from Seeding time to Harvest be in, and this covenant to be fulfilled, the aforesaid Tenants will then, when so any swine be taken in default aforesaid, that he that own the swine shall loose to the Lord 4d., and each Tenant of them aforesaid shall have as many swine as it is written underneath, That is to Witt, every Tenant of Tenants aforesaid of the said Town, that Brews to Sell, and the Milner, shall hold three swine ; and every Tenant of the Tenants aforesaid, that holds Land in the Fields, shall have two swine ; and every Tenant of Tenants aforesaid, that holds no Land, shall have one swine.”

Sir John Assheton married Margaret, sister or daughter of Perkins de Legh, of Lyme. He left issue Johanna, who married Robert Davenport, of Bramhall, Knt.,<sup>(33)</sup> and John his only son and heir, who succeeded him.

Sir JOHN DE ASSHETON :—Little is known of this person. He is supposed to have married a daughter of Sir Robert Standish, Knt. Some say Stanley. Which is correct we cannot determine. He was drowned at Norham ; and left two sons John and Nicholas, both knights. It is stated that Nicholas was of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem or Rhodes.<sup>(34)</sup> Roby says, concerning this—“ In a MS. of receipts and disbursements belonging to the Cheethams, kept in the time of Charles II., there is an item for moneys paid for gloves to the boon-shearers at Clayton Hall, where Humphrey Cheetham, founder of the College at Manchester, then resided. The acknowledgment of a rose before mentioned might seem to have some allusion to the Knights Hospitallers.

(33.) Ormerod's Cheshire, vol. iii., p. 401.

(34.) Sir George Booth's Evidences.

The estate of Lime Hurst was called John of Jerusalem's land, and the tithes and rent, in all probability, once went to the support of that order. In the Ashton pedigree we find a Nicholas Assheton, as it was then spelt, who enrolled himself amongst these warrior-monks. It seems not improbable that the profits of this estate belonged to him."<sup>(35)</sup> John his eldest son and heir succeeded his father in the Manor of Ashton.

Sir JOHN DE ASSHETON was one of forty-six esquires who were summoned by Henry Duke of Lancaster, to receive the Knighthood of the Bath, on the eve of his coronation, October 13th, 1399.<sup>(36)</sup> This Sir John, with Sir John de Stanley, the younger, was returned to parliament in the 1st of Henry V. (1413) for the County of Lancaster.<sup>(37)</sup> He was one of the most influential knights of the line, and succeeded in his attempt to render the subordination of the Asshetons to their superior lord merely nominal.<sup>(38)</sup> The condition of tenure, which as we have already stated, being so frequently altered by the barons of Manchester, was now so changed as to make Sir John not the nominal but real lord of the manor of Ashton. It appears that in 1412, or February 25th, 1413, Thomas Lord (Magister) de la Warre, ninth baron and also Rector of Manchester, conveyed an interest in the manor of Manchester, to Thomas Longley (Langley), Bishop of Durham, Sir William Thyrynyng, and others, to inquire into the degree of subjection of the lord of Ashton to Manchester, whereupon Sir John de Assheton is found to hold the manor with

(35.) *Roby's Traditions of Lanc.*, vol. i., pp. 95, 96.

(36.) *Ante's Knights of the Bath*, appen., f. 22.

(37.) The indenture for the return of Sir John Stanley, as knight of the shire of the county of Lancaster, 1 Henry V. was singular, both with respect of the form and person, each knight being severally, not jointly, returned. The indenture made to Sir John Stanley has been preserved, while the like indenture made to Sir John Ashton has been lost. Sir John Stanley's was to the following effect :—

Hac indentura testatur, inter Radum de Stanley V. C. Lanc. ex una parte et Nicum Longford ch'lr et omnes alios post se infra istas indenturas nominat. Qui quidem Nicus et omnes alii post se unanimi concessu et assensu eligi fecerunt liberam electionem, dant Johi de Stanley juniore, plenam potestatem pro seipsis et omnibus suis essend. Militem in Parlamento Domini Regis prox. tenend. apud Westm. die lunæ, &c. ad respondend. pro seipsis et omnibus suis et pro omnibus communitatibus com. Lanc. ad ea quæ in dicto Parlamento favente Domino ordinari contigerit. In cujus rei testimonium sigilla sua alternatim apposuerunt. *Prynne's Brev. Parl. Redd.*, p. 163.

(38.) *Hist. of Ashton*, E. Butterworth, p. 18, Ed. 1842.

its appurtenances of Thomas Lord de la Warre, by fealty, and service of twenty-two shillings annually, and one hawk, or forty shillings, and a contribution called *putura*, to the maintainance of the foresters of Horwich and Blakeley, as part of the manor of Manchester. This document which is of the greatest local interest is as follows :—

“ To all &c., Thomas Longley, Bishop of Durham ; William Thyrynyng, Knt. ; John Heneage, Nicholas Mott, parson of the church at Swineshead ; Richard Lumbard, parson of the church of Holthyng ; William Auncell, John Overton, and Richard Fryth, greeting :—WHEREAS John de Assheton, Knight, hath held the manor of Ashton, with appurtenances, in co. Lancaster, of Thomas, Lord de la Warre, lord of Mamecestre, by fealty and service of rendering yearly 22s., one hawk, or 40s. for the *puture* of the forests of Horwich and Blakeley, as of the manor of Mamecestre, which manor the said Thomas la Warre holds for his life, of our grant, the reversion whereof at the end of his death belongeth to us and our heirs. Within which manor of Mamecestre and Ashton, as well as the same Thomas la Warre and his ancestors, as we and those we have put in our places in the said manor, have, and have for time beyond memory, View of Frank-pledge<sup>(39)</sup> and whatever to it belongs, toll,<sup>(40)</sup> picage<sup>(41)</sup> and stallage,<sup>(42)</sup> as much as belongs to the said manor. Know YE that we have granted to the said John de Assheton, his heirs and assigns, all our estate in View of Frank-pledge, and all things appertaining of all tenants and residents within the manor of Ashton, and the vill of

(39.) VIEW OF FRANK-PLEDGE.—The title of a court as a “View of Frank-pledge” points to its former importance, under the system of police introduced or perfected by King Alfred, which required that all freemen above twelve years of age should be received into a decennary, or tithing ; forming a society of not less than ten freemen, each of whom was to be *borhos*, that is *pledge* or *security*, for the good conduct of the others. The duty of inspecting a decennary or tithing was called a View of Frank-pledge, the freeborrows or freemen having received from their Norman conquerors the designation well known in Normandy of frank-pledges. The principal or eldest of these freeborrows was especially responsible for the good conduct of each of his co-pledges, and appears to have had an authority analogous to that still exercised by the constable. See for fuller discussion, *Pol. Cyclop.* Bohn Ref. Lib., vol. iii., p. 239. For the preservation of the public peace, therefore, this ancient custom was established in England, by which every free-born man at the age of fourteen years (except religious persons, clerks, knights, and their eldest sons) were obliged to give security for his allegiance and behaviour towards the king and his subjects, or else be imprisoned. Accordingly, within the manor a certain number of the neighbours became interchangeably bound for each other. They were to see that each person of their pledge, was forthcoming at all times ; and if any one absented himself, they were to answer for the offence. So by this custom, whenever any person committed any depredations, or otherwise offended, it was soon ascertained to what pledge he belonged ; and the person so bound, must either produce the offender in thirty-one days, or else make satisfaction for his offence. *Transactions of the Lanc. Antq. Soc.*, p. 11, note.

(40.) TOLL.—Payment for passage, &c.

(41.) PICAGE.—A consideration payable to the lord for breaking ground, for setting up stalls, or for booths.

(42.) STALLAGE.—Payments for the privilege of having stalls in the fair or markets.

Ashton, together with picage and stallage within the said manor and vill. AND FURTHER, we will grant, as much as in us is, that the said John de Assheton and his heirs, after the death of Thomas la Warre, may have for ever, within the said manor and vill of Ashton of all the tenants and inhabitants, View of Frank-pledge, toll, &c., as freely and entirely as the said Thomas, Lord de Warre, and his ancestors had, or as we have in the manor of Mamecestre to our exclusion, &c. AND FURTHER, we grant that, after the death of the said Thomas la Warre, the said John de Assheton, and his heirs may be quit and exonerated from 21s. 11d. of the said rent of 22s., and of the render of the aforesaid hawk. So that the said John de Assheton, &c., may hold the said manor of Ashton, with appurtenances, of us, &c., after the death of the said Thomas, Lord de la Warre, by fealty and a rent of one penny, to be paid yearly at the Nativity of St. John Baptist (June 24), and by the service of giving *puture* to the said foresters, for (instead of) all other services; which said rent of 21s. 11d. and the said hawk we now remit and release; [to one counterpart the grantees set their seals, to the other John de Assheton sets his]. WITNESSES, Ralph de Stanley, Knight; John de Pilkington, Knight; John de Hilton, Richard de Radcliff, Adam de Lever, and others. Given at Swineshead, on St. Matthew the Apostle's day (September 21), in the 13th year of the reign of Henry IV. (1412)."<sup>(43)</sup>

In 1413 he was chosen Knight of the Shire.<sup>(44)</sup> In 1417 he was appointed seneschal of Bayeux, and in December of the same year he was commanded by Henry the Fifth to protect the religions within the same place. These injunctions dated from the village of Falaise the 14th of December, contain the following particulars:—The brethren residing in the hospital of St. Nicholas, and the canons of the Church of St. Mary within the City: the religious inhabiting the Convent of St. Martin de Mondae, of the order of St. Augustine, and the religious men dwelling in the

(43.) Harleian Collection, Codex 4900, fo. c.

(44.) Baines in his *Hist. of Lanc.* gives us a list of the Knights for the county of Lancaster in Parliament. Among which we observe the following Asshetons:—

Joh'es Assheton.....	{	Westminster, Monday, Octaves of St. Michael (Oct. 6, 1382),
Robert Usewick .....		wages £10 16 for 27 days. Cl. 6 R. II. p. 1m. 17d.
John de Assheton,	{	Cantebrigge, Morrow of Nat. B. Mary (Sep. 9, 1388), wages £18
Chivaler... ..		8 for 46 days. Cl. 12 R. II. m. 14d.
John de Crofts,	{	
Chivaler... ..		
John de Assheton,	{	Westminster, Mond. after St. Hillary (Jan. 17, 1390), wages £22
Chivaler.....		for 56 days. Cl. 13 R. II. p. 2m. 7d.
Rad. de Ipres,	{	
Chivaler.....		
John Assheton .....	{	(1472. 12 Ed. IV.)
Robert Harynton. ....		

[pp. 98, vol. i, Ed. 1868.]

Convent of St. Mary de Longues, of the order of St. Benedict, near the City of Bayeux, are to be preserved from molestation.<sup>(45)</sup> In 1419 he was appointed Governor of Hadupais, and the same year became Bailiff or Constable of Constance.

Sir John, now being in possession by the above indenture, which was confirmed by another indenture made and executed in the reign of Henry, the subsequent year by the same Bishop; John Heneage and others;<sup>(46)</sup> caused a detailed and accurate survey to be taken of his possessions, the result of which has been entered in his notorious "Custom Roll and Rental," which has become one of the most valuable documents in the north of England, in as much as it illustrates the customs of those days of yore, and shows the relation which existed at that time between the lord and his serfs. Mr. Baines, referring to it, remarks that this custumale "casts much light on the early customs and manners of the parish, which, though not differing much from other manorial customs, there is a minuteness of detail that interests while it informs, and exhibits at once a state of society where service was substituted for money, and local authority for national law."<sup>(47)</sup>

The first quaint condition in this document is concerning the growth, buying, selling, and grinding of corn by his tenants, as follows:—

(45.) PRO CANONICIS BAIUEX.—Rex dilecto & fideli suo, *Johanni de Asheton*, Seneschallo nostro de Baieux, Salutem.

Cum, de Gratia nostra speciali Concessimus, dilectis nobis in Christo *Canonicis Residentibus in Ecclesia Cathedrali Beata Mariæ nostra Baiueux aliis Ministris ibidem* Deo Servientibus, & Sub Fide & Ligeantia nostris existentibus, quod ipsi habeant & teneant omnes & singulos Hæreditates & Redditus ad Corpus Ecclesiæ prædictum, qualitercumque pertinentes.

Ita quod ipsi de eisdem Hæreditatibus & Redditibus ad onera, eidem Ecclesiæ incumbentia, supportanda juxta Consuetudinem ibidem hactenus rationabiliter habitam & usitatem disponere possint, quousque pro Regimine & Gubernatione ejusdem Ecclesiæ ad Dei Laudem & Honorem, aliter duxerimus Ordinandum.

Prout in Literis nostris Patentibus inde confectis plenius continentur.

Vobis Mandamus quod ipsos *Canonicos Capellanos Clericos & alios Ministros*, ibidem Deo Servientes omnes & singulos Hæreditates & Redditus ad corpus Ecclesiæ prædictæ infra Ballivam vestram qualitercumque pertinentes, habere permittatis juxta Tenorem Literarum nostram prædictarum ipsos, contra Tenorem earundem non Molestantes in aliquo seu Gravantes.

Teste Rege in *Exercitu* suo prope Villam Falesiæ in Ducatu Regis prædicto decimo quarto die Decembris. Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. ix., p. 530.

(46.) Baines' *Hist. of Lanc.*, p. 536, vol. ii., Ed. 1836.

(47.) *Ibid.*, p. 543.

"The Free Tenants-at-will of the Lordshippe of Assheton, the year of the reign of King Henry the Fourth, after the conquest the first, grantyn to John of Assheton, Knight, in his plain Hall Court, the Tuesday next before the Ascension of our Lord, that if any Free Tenant or Tennants that owe multer to the milne, sell their Corne growing upon their Tenements, and buy Corne of other, and with the same Corne bought come to the milne and multer not, but the Love sucken of that Corne bought, and of this they be convicted in the Lord's Court by Inquest, they shall pay the Lord xxs. the which shall be raised of their Goods by the Lord's Bailey."<sup>(48)</sup>

The second portion of the document comprises the "Rent-roll" proper, which bears the date A.D. 1422, and the following introduction:—

"At the ffeast of Martyn in winter, the year of the King Henry (the sixth after the conquest) the First. All the Tenants of the Lordship of Assheton-under-Lyne, taking their Tenements to ffarm for twenty winter term, at John of Assheton, Knight, the which came out of Normandy. At the same ffeast, with all the services, customs, and usages, as after is, in this same Book written and rehearsed, and as it has been used and customed of old time, and every man to pay his ffarm at two tymes in the year, as the Rental of this Book makes mention.

"The service of the said Tenants is this, that they shall give their presents at Yole (Christmas) every present of such a value, as it is written and set in the Rental, and the Lord shall ffeed all his said Tenants and their wives, upon Yole day at the dinner, if them like to come, but the said Tenants and their wives, though it be for their ease not for to come, they shall send neither man nor woman in their name, but if (except) he be their son, other their daughter dwelling with them unto the dinner, ffor the Lord is not bounden to ffeed all, save only the good man and his good wife. Also every Tenant that plough has, shall plough two days, and he that half plough has, shall plough a day, whether the Lord be leiver<sup>(49)</sup> in wheat-seeding, other in Lenten seeding; and every Tenant harrow a day with their harrow in seeding time, when they bin charged, and they shall cart, every Tenant ten cart full of turve, fro Done a Moss, to Asheton; and shear ffour days in harvest, and cart a day corne, and they shall pay a principal at their death,<sup>(50)</sup> that is to wit: the best beast they have, which other deed, next after Holy Kirk.<sup>(51)</sup>

(48.) Old MSS., Appendix, Butterworth, Ed. 1823; also, Barritt's MSS., copied from above MSS. in possession of Ralphe Assheton, of Middleton, 1749.

(49.) *Be liever*—more willing.

(50.) A heriot.

(51.) According to the general custom, the *second best* beast of the deceased was the property of the priest; but at Assheton the lord was not entitled to his heriot till the *best* beast had been delivered at the holy kirk.



"Also the said Tenants shall multer their corne growing upon their said Tenements at the Lord's milne to the sixteenth vessel,<sup>(52)</sup> and they shall go to none other milne to make their corne growing on their Tenements, but to the Lord's milne, and if they buy corne the which is dried with the Lord's ffewel, they shall multer at the Lord's milne to the sixteenth vessel, and all other corne that they buy, they multer to the love sucken, which is to the twenty-fourth vessel, and go to none other milne, if the corne be brought within the said lordship.

This is the whole Rental of the Tenants-at-will of the said Lordship of Assheton, and the value of their presents at Yole, the year and day aforesaid. at which Rent shall be payd at two terms of the year, that is for to wit: the ton half at the ffeast of St John Baptist, and tother half at the ffeast of St. Martin, 'ith' winter."<sup>(53)</sup>

Here follows a full and detailed account of Sir John's tenants and their respective obligations to their Lord.<sup>(54)</sup> Among the tenants are found many rustic names, "showing," says Baines, "the origin of many of the surnames of the parish." Among which we find these quint appellations:—"William, the Walker; Roger, the Smith; Nan or Nanne, of Windebanke; John Ffulstaffe; Syssot, that was the wife of Thomas the Cook; Roger, the Baxter; William, the Arrowsmith; Jack, the Spencer; Elyn, the Rose; Jenkyn, of the Wood; Jack, the Merse; John, the Slater; Roger, the Cropper; Robert, the Wright," &c., &c.

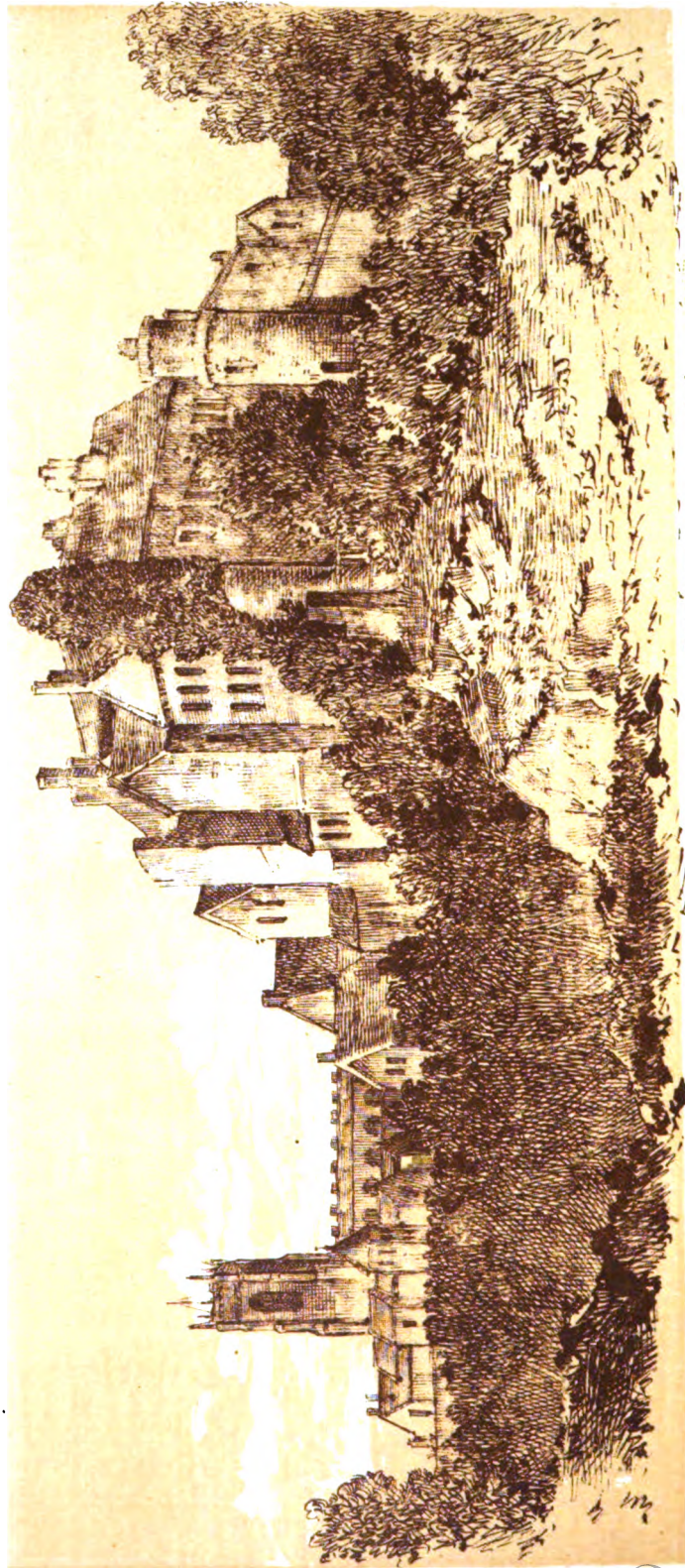
"At the period," says Dr. Hibbert Ware, "in which this Knight, Sir John, settled upon the estate tenures had assumed that definite form to which were applied the term *Soccage*, a word of obscure etymology, supposed to denote privilege or liberty, in contradistinction to the interminate services of more ancient feuds. By the necessity imposed upon feudatories of dispensing with

(52.) The obligation of tenants to grind at the mills of lords of manors is of high antiquity. The corn mills of all manors seem to have been possessed by the lords. At Assheton, John of the Edge appears to have been the "milner," and the annual rent rendered by him for his two mills was 16s. 4d., the mills to be held up (repaired) by the lord. The general toll of the miller was the sixteenth vessel. If any one sold the corn growing on his own tenement, and secretly bought corn of other tenants of the lord, representing the purchased corn to be of another manor, therefore only liable to the "love socome" (twenty-fourth vessel), having been dried by other than the lord's fuel,—such offender, if convicted, was fined at the lord's will.

(53.) MSS in possession of Ralphe Assheton, &c., 1749. Barritt's MSS., &c.

(54.) The full text of this interesting document will be given with other MSS. in the Appendix to the first volume.





ASHTON OLD HALL IN THE 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

*From an old gardening, supposed to be by Balston.*





the military obligations of part of their tenants, an approach was being made in the feudal system towards a civil establishment. The dependants, thus exempted from the military service (then the most honourable and distinguished employment), cultivated the land, attended to the labours of husbandry, and made a return of corn, cattle, or money, in lieu of other obligations. The residence of the lord had long conferred upon Ashton the appellation of Manor. The obligations of the Tenants-at-will were of a base and servile nature, yet determinate, and therefore comprehended under the name of *Villanum Soccagium*. They were excluded from partaking in the honours of the 'tented field,' being destined, on the Manor of their Lord, to perform the duties of civil and agricultural drudgery. Thus the opprobrium cast upon such menial employments as ploughing the lord's land, or carting the lord's fuel or manure, originating from the high sense entertained in this early period of military allegiance, is transmitted to later times in the debasing idea that the name villain, originally nothing more than a feudal term, never fails to excite. Soccage labour was familiarly called boon work; hence the old adage still retained, when a man is supposed to be working for nothing, 'that he has been served like a boon shearer.' "(55)

Referring to the peculiarity of Tenure, it is stated: "Three of the most remarkable tenures in this manor are expressed in the rent roll in these terms: 'Sysst, that was the wife of Patrick, for a house and garden at the Milne, she shall shear four days in harvest, and she shall give a principal at her dying; (56) and for her term shall pay 2s. and a present at Yule to the value of 4d.' Another runs thus:—'Rauf of Assheton, and Robyn of Assheton have the Sour Car, Gulde Rode, and Stane Rynges for the term of their lives; Rauf, of the gift of John Assheton, Knyghte, the elder; and Robyn, of the gift of John of Assheton, Knyghte, the younger, the Farm.' The last is to the effect that, 'Richard of Bardesley rendered for Bardesley a rose.' "

(55.) "Customs of a Manor in the North of England," by Dr. Hibbert Ware.

(56.) PRINCIPAL, &c.—A heriot.

A—III.

This same person, Sir John de Assheton obtained two fairs, for cattle and general wares, in Ashton, which were held by patent, under the duchy seal, and were granted by Henry the Sixth, in the fourteenth year of his reign, one on the eve, the feast, and morrow of St. Swithin, (14th, 15th, and 16th of July,) and the other on the eve, the feast, and morrow of St. Martin, (9th, 10th, and 11th of November.)<sup>(57)</sup> Sir John de Assheton first married Jane, daughter of John Savile, of Tankersley, Co. York (Collins says, Isabel, daughter of Elland of Brighthouse, Co. York); Second, Margaret or Mary, daughter of Sir John Byron, of Clayton, Knt. He had issue by his first wife, Thomas, Robert, Lawrence, John, Lucy, Margaret, Katharine, Elizabeth, Agnes, Anne, and Isabel. By his second wife, Ralph, who married Margaret, cousin or daughter, and sole heiress of Richard Barton, of Middleton, and became through this marriage, the ancestor of that knightly race, the Asshetons of Middleton, who flourished as Knights and Baronets for upwards of three centuries.<sup>(58)</sup> Ralph was knighted, and on account of his supposed tyranny has been generally accepted as the *Black Knight*. Sir John de Assheton died in the year 1428 and was succeeded by his eldest son and heir, Thomas.

Sir THOMAS DE ASSHETON, unlike a long line of military repute, when young attached himself more to the study of the laboratory than to the feats of the field.<sup>(59)</sup> In an age of witchcraft and superstition, Sir Thomas began his practice as an alchemist.<sup>(60)</sup> In the reign of Henry VI., the alchemist was held in high esteem, and was patronised by the King. But the populace regarded his art as diabolical and looked upon him

(57.) *Hist. of Lanc.*, Baines, vol. iii., p. 551, Ed. 1836.

(58.) *Hist. of Ashton*, Edwin Butterworth, p. 19, Ed. 1842.

(59.) *Ibid.*

(60.) ALCHEMIST.—Alchemy (from *al* Arab. the, and *chēmeia*, chemistry) was the pretended art of transmuting the inferior metals into gold or silver, by means of what was called the Philosopher's stone, or the powder of projection, a red powder possessing a peculiar smell, supposed to have originated among the Arabians; Geber, an Arabian physician of the seventh century, being one of the earliest alchemists whose works are extant. A subsequent object of alchemy was the discovery of a universal medicine, the *Elixir Vitæ*, which was to give perpetual life, health, and youth. See *Lanc. Folk Lore*, p. 23.

with fear. Henry VI., suffering from impecuniosity, was led to believe that the Alchemist could supply his coffers with abundant means; but the over credulous Prince was sadly imposed upon and disappointed. In the wars between the houses of York and Lancaster, the Asshetons had espoused the Lancastrian cause; it was not however in the field, but in the laboratory, that Sir Thomas Assheton wished to serve his Sovereign. Having associated himself with Sir Edmund de Trafford, another alchemist, they laboured together to relieve the King of his financial difficulties by what was known as the *Philosopher's Stone*.<sup>(61)</sup> They seem to have been actively engaged together in the delusive pursuit of the transmutation of metals, and, self-deceived, they deluded the King with promises of wealth which never could be realised. Their supposed power of transmuting the baser metals into gold had great attractions for the weak King, whose treasury was low, and who was encumbered with debt. They were not mere adventurers, but men descended from ancient families, opulent, and of high estimation in their native country.<sup>(62)</sup> These sages, commissioned to effect their golden projects, who modestly designated themselves, "lovers of truth and haters of deception," even boasted that man, by their powers, would enjoy perpetual youth. So credulous was the King that he actually informed his people that the happy hour was approaching when all his debts would be totally discharged!<sup>(63)</sup> But the populace became still more alarmed at the supposed artfulness of these workers in alchemy, and their persons were endangered.<sup>(64)</sup> Fuller found in the Tower of London, and copied<sup>(65)</sup> a patent granted to the two Knights by Henry VI., in the twenty-fourth year of his reign (1446), of which he gives the following translation:—

"The King to all unto whom, &c., greeting—Know ye, that whereas our beloved and loyal Edmund de Trafford, Knight, and Thomas Ashton, Knight, have, by a certain petition shown unto us, set forth that although they were

(61.) Baines' *Hist. of Lanc.*, vol. ii., p. 540; also vol. i., p. 406, Ed. 1836.

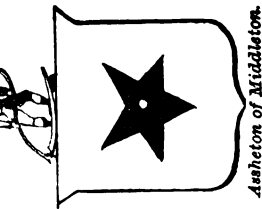
(62.) *Lanc. Folk Lore*, p. 31.

(63.) See Pennant's *London*; Baines' *Hist. of Lanc.*, 12mo., vol i., p. 37; *Lanc. Folk Lore*, p. 32; also, "Transactions of the Lancashire Antiquarian Society," part i., pp. 16, 17.

(64.) *Hist. of Ashton*, Butterworth, Ed. 1842, p. 20.

(65.) *Worthius*, &c., p. 122.



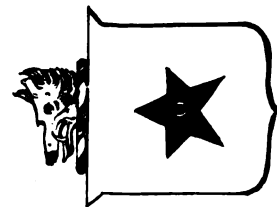


Asheton of Middleton.

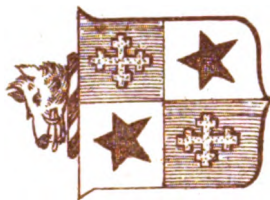
## The Asshetons

of

## Ashton-under-Lyne.



Asheton of Ashton-under-Lyne.



Asheton of Chadderton.

**ORMEUS FITZ AILWARD**, to whom Albertus de Greslet gave one carucate of land in Eston, besides a Knight's fee in Dalton, Parbold, and Wrightington.—*Testis de Newill*, fol. 404.

**ROGER FITZ ORME DE ASSHETON**, gave lands in Nuthurst to the Abbey of Cockersand.—Kuerden's Fol. MS., p. 214.

**SIR THOMAS DE ASSHETON**, supposed to be son of Roger, and also the first Knight in the line.

**SIR JOHN DE ASSHETON**, chartered to have free warren in his demesne lands in Ashton, 27 Aug., 1335.—Rot. Chart, 9 Edw. III.

**SIR ROBERT DE ASSHETON**, Lord Treasurer of England, 34 Edw. III.; Admiral of the Narrow Seas, 43 Edw. III.; Justice of Ireland, 46 Edw. III.; King's Chamberlain, 47 Edw. III.; Constable of Dover Castle, &c., 4 Rd. II. Died 9th Jan., 1384.

**THOMAS DE ASSHETON**, captured Standard of Scotland at Neville's Cross, 17th Oct., 1346. Accompanied John of Gaunt to Spain, 7th Jan., 9 Ric. II.

**SIR JOHN DE ASSHETON**, Knight of the Shire for the County of Lancaster, in the Parliaments of the 6, 12, & 13 Ric. II. Leaped over the fortress wall at Picardy, 13 Ric. II.

**SIR JOHN DE ASSHETON**, drowned at Northam.

M. ——— daughter of Sir Robert Standish, some, say daughter of one named Stanley.

M. EMMA, daughter of Albertus de Greslet, first Baron of Manchester.

**THOMAS DE ASSHETON**, with Orme, his father, gave lands to Robert Buron [Byron] *pro homagio et servicio*.

M. MARGERIE, daughter of Sir John Byron, widow of Sir Edmund Talbot, who died 18 Edw. III.—Whitaker's *Cronica*, p. 25.

M. 1st. ELIZABETH, but ——— M. and PHILIPPA, GILBERT, whose daughter she was widow of Sir Matthew de Gorney, Inquis. in Kuerden's MSS., A.

M. ELEANOR, [WILLIAM], Dr. [ELEANOR], M. [HENRY], supposed to have daughter of Sir John Berkley, signed Treaty of Pease, between Ed. III. and King John of France May 8, 1360, but his name is omitted in some Pedigrees.

M. MARGARET, daughter of ——— Pertins de Legh, of Lyne, Co. Chester.

JOHANNA, M. Sir Robert Davenport, of Bramhall, Kat.

M. for his *Second* wife  
**SIR JOHN DE ASSHETON**, Knight of the Bath at the Coronation of Hen. IV. 1399; Knight of the Shire, 1 Hen. V.; Seneschal of Bayeux, 5 Hen. V.; Constable of Constance, 7 Henry V.; caused the renowned Rent Roll, &c., to be drawn up, dated 1422.

**MARGARET**, or **MARY**, daughter of Sir John Byron, of Clayton, Knt.

**NICHOLAS**, Knight of Jerusalem, or Rhodes.

**SIR RALPH ASSHETON**, of Middleton, reputed Black Knight.

**M. MARGARET**, daughter, some say cousin, and sole heiress of Richard Barton, of Middleton.

See PEDIGREE OF ASSHETONS, of Middleton.

**SIR THOMAS ASSHETON**, Alchemist, *temp.* 24 Hen. VI.

**M. ELIZABETH**, daughter of Sir John Byron, of Clayton, Knt.

**M. JOHN**, omitted in some pedigrees

**LAWRENCE**

**ROBERT**

**LUCY**, M. 1st **MARGARET** RINE, M. Thomas Langley, of Agcroft.

**KATHA-** M. John Duchenfield.

**ELIZA-** M. 1st, Sir Rph. Harrington; 2nd, Sir Ric. Hamerton.

**AGNES**, M. Thos. Booth, of Barton, Esq. Chester

**ANNE**, M. Dutton, County

**MARY** [ISABEL]

**SIR JOHN ASSHETON**, Knighted before the Battle of Northampton, 10th July, 1460. Died 23 Hen. VII.

**M. 1st. DULCIA**, daughter of Sir Edmund Trafford of Trafford, 16 Hen. VI.

**M. 2nd. ISABEL**, daughter of Eiland, of York. Died 1488, without issue.

**EDMUND**, M. Johanna, daughter of Richard Radcliffe, of Chadderton, Esq.

**GEOFFREY**, M. daughter and heiress of Thomas Mannow, of Shepley.

**DULCIA**, M. Sir John Trafford, Knt. Esq.

**M. ELIZABETH**, M. Sir John Trafford, Knt.

**NICHOLAS**, M. daughter of Lord Brook Sergeant-at-Law.

Four other children.

**M. 1st wife, ELIZABETH**, daughter and heiress of Ralph Staveleigh, of Stayley.

**SIR THOMAS ASSHETON**, Knighted at Ripon, 7 Hen. VII. Died 8 Hen. VIII. Last of the Line.

**M. 2nd wife, AGNES**, one of the ten daughters and co-heiresses of Sir Jas. Harrington, of Woolfage, Co. Northampton.

**MARGARET**, M. **SIR WM. ELIZABETH M. BOOTH**, of Dunham Massey.

**JOAN**, M. Sir John Leigh, of Booth, Co. Chester.

**JOHN** died with out issue. Foster makes him a son of Sir Thos. Assheton by first wife.

**M. Sir Rich Hoghton, of Hoghton Tower, Esq.**

See PEDIGREE of the EARLS OF STAMFORD AND WARRINGTON.



Byron of Clayton.

willing by the art or science of philosophy to work upon certain metals, to translate [transmute] imperfect metals from their own kind, and then to transubstantiate them by their said art or science as they say, into perfect Gold or Silver, unto all manner of proofs or trials, to be expected and endured as any gold or silver growing in any mine,—Notwithstanding certain persons ill-willing and maligning them, conceiving them to work by unlawful art, and so may hinder and disturb them in the trial of the said art and science: We, considering the premises, and willing to know the conclusion of the said work or science, of our special grace have granted and given leave to the same Edmund and Thomas, and to their servants, that they may work and try the aforesaid art and science lawfully and freely, without any hindrance of ours, or of our officers, whatsoever; any statute, act, ordinance, or provision made, ordained, or provided to the contrary notwithstanding. In witness whereof, &c., the King at Westminster, the 7th day of April" [1446]<sup>(66)</sup>

It is scarcely necessary to add that the stone failed, and the King's debts must have remained unpaid if his Majesty had not pawned the revenue of the Duchy of Lancaster to satisfy the demands of his clamorous creditors.<sup>(67)</sup>

Sir Thomas in this reign, preferred a claim to exercise the rights of piccage, weif,<sup>(68)</sup> stray,<sup>(69)</sup> theol,<sup>(70)</sup> picag-et-stalag.<sup>(71)</sup> The claim is as follows:—(translation.)

"Ashton-under-Lyne.

"Tho. Ashton, Knight, hath view of Frank-pledge twice a year, of all his tenants resident within his Manor Ashton-under-Lyne, and hath one weekly fair on Monday, at the said Manor, waif, stray, toll, picage and stallage, two fairs in markets at the said manor to be held one on the 1st and 2nd of July, the other the eve and feast of St. Martyn in winter (November 10th 11th.)"<sup>(72)</sup>

Sir Thomas left issue, Sir John, his eldest son and successor; Edmund, who became seated at Chadderton, in Oldham, by marrying Johanna, daughter of Richard Radcliffe, or Radcliffe

(66.) The full text of this curious patent will be inserted in the Appendix to Vol. i.

(67.) *Lanc. Folk Lore*, p. 32.

(68.) A right to things which have no owners.

(69.) A claim to impound stray cattle, &c.

(70.) Toll of passage.

(71.) Payments for the privilege of having stalls in the fairs or markets.

(72.) Kuerden, 4to. MSS., fo. 54, cited by Baines, *Hist. of Lanc.*, p. 425, Ed. 1868.

Chadderton, Esq.; Geoffrey, first of Shepley, in right of his wife, the daughter and heiress of Thomas Mannow, of Shepley; Nicholas, sergeant at law, 1443, justice of the King's bench, 1445, married Mary, daughter of Lord Brook; Elizabeth, wife of Sir John Trafford, of Trafford Knt.; and Dulcia, who married Thomas Gerard, of Bryn, Esq. He had also four other children.

Sir JOHN ASSHETON, son of Sir Thomas, fought by the side of his Sovereign in the battle of Northampton, July 10th, 1460, where, with eight others, previous to the engagement he received the honour of Knighthood. He married first, Dulcia, daughter of Edmund Trafford; and secondly, Isabel, daughter of De Elland, and died 1508. By his first wife he had issue Thomas Assheton.

Sir THOMAS ASSHETON, son and heir of Sir John, was Knighted at Ripon in 1491: he married first, Elizabeth, daughter and sole heiress of Ralph Staley, Esq., of Staley Hall, near Stalybridge; and secondly, Agnes, daughter of Sir James Harrington, of Woolfage, Knt. Sir Thomas died in 1516, and was the last surviving male representative of the Asshetons.

"In the Calendar of Pleadings, printed in 1823, by order of His Majesty, George IV., which is stated to consist 'of Bills, Answers and Depositions, and Surveys, in suits exhibited in the Duchy Court,'<sup>(73)</sup> we find, at page 126, Sir Thomas, in 3rd of Henry VIII., appearing as defendant in a disputed claim to suit of Court, for lands and tenements in Taunton, and in his Manor

(73.) The *Inquisitiones Post Mortem*, are loosely thrown together, yet, as Dr. Whitaker very justly remarks (*Hist. of Whalley*, p. 169), "they are of little value but for the purpose of finding an heir. Their descriptions are almost always in round numbers, which must generally be false—*c. gr.*, 100 *acras terra*, 50 *prati*, 200 *Jamphorum et bruera*, and it is not uncommon in two successive generations to find the same premises estimated at twice the quantity, or perhaps one-half." In the printed edition we have only the date of the death of the possessor, and an enumeration of the names of the property which the defuncts held at the time of their decease, without describing either the quantity of acres, or under what tenure they were held. But the greatest deficiency of all is, and that might have been supplied in one line, at the foot of each inquisition, stating who were nearest in degree of consanguinity, and what age the male or female heir was at the time of the death of their relations. Had this been done, these inquisitions would have become a most valuable acquisition to the genealogist and historian. What object the compilers of these records had in view, by such omissions, we know not, nor is it our duty here to enquire; but certainly their majesties most gracious intentions have been frustrated, and the historian disappointed. *Trans. Lanc. Antq. Soc.*, p. 18, note.

of Ashton-under-Lyne. The following is a copy as it stands in the printed records :—

## CALENDAR OF PLEADINGS.

Reign.	Plaintiffs.	Defendants.	Premises and Matters. in Dispute.	Places.	Counties.
3 Hen. 8.	Richard Claydon.	Sir Thos. Ashton, Knight.	Disputed Claim to Suit of Court for Lands and Tenements.	Taunton, Ashton- under-line Manor.	Lan- cashire.

“ This Sir Thomas died, as appears by *Inquis' Post Mortem*, 8th Henry VIII. (1516), seized of the Manor of Ashton subter Limam, in socage and in fee, which he held from Sir Thomas West, Knt., by the render of 1d., worth 100 marks; the Manor of Alt from the King, as Duke of Lancaster, in fee, and a rent of 20d., val. 20 marks; lands in Oldham, in socage, from John Cudworth, worth 3l.; lands in Hundersfield, from the heirs of John de Buckley, in socage, worth 40s.; lands and rents in Manchester, with the advowson of the Church of Ashton, in socage, val. 20s., which he held from the Lord de la Warr; and that George Booth, son of Margaret, late wife of William Booth, daughter of the said Thomas Ashton; and Alice Ashton, wife of Richard Hoghton, were found to be his next heirs. The aforesaid George Booth was 20 years of age, and his daughter Alice 22.<sup>(74)</sup>

“ In the *Calendarium Inquis' Post Mortem*, printed by order of His Majesty in 1823, at page 19 we find the following entry of this Sir Thomas Ashton :—

7 Hen. 8, Thomas Ashton.		
Asshton Maner'	}	terr' messaug' gardin, &c. }
et advoc' eccles'		
Alt		
Oldom		
Hunnersfyld		
Mauncester		
Elston		
Halghton		
Fyshewk		
Dynkley		
Lancaster		
		Lancastr'.

(74.) Kuerden's MSS., cited in *Trans. Lanc. Antiq. Soc.*, p. 19.

“ His daughter Elizabeth, who married Randle Ashton, Esq., survived him 41 years, and died 4 & 5 of Philip and Mary (1557) possessed, as appears by *Inq. P. M.*, of the seventh part of a capital messuage, with the advowson of the Church in Ashton-under-line; also 52 messuages, 500 acres of meadow and pasture land, 200 of wood, and 500 of moss, moor, gorse, and heath ground, which she held in the same place from the Executors of the Lord de la Warr, by socage and in fee, and the render of one-third part of a penny, and was worth 40 marks; that William Booth and Thomas Hoghton, next of kin, were her heirs, William was 16, and Thomas 39.<sup>(75)</sup>

“ This inquisition is also briefly noticed in *Calend. Inq. P. M.*, page 39, as follows:—

4 & 5 Phil. and Mar., Elizabeth Assheton.

Assheton Maner' et advoc' ecclie	}	Lancastr'.
Messuag', terr' bosc' &c.		

“ Thus were the demesne lands of Ashton divided between the Booths and the Hoghtons; but the Manor and Chief part of the hereditaments fell to the share of the Booths, and the ancient name of Ashton, of Ashton-under-line, became extinct there, and the manor, demesne, lands, and advowson of the church, passed into another name.”

(75.) 4 and 5 P. M. Eliz. Asht' ten. ‡ cap. mes: de Asht' subter lima' ac ad: de Asht' ac 52 ms. 500 t. pr. p. 200 bosc: 500 mos more Jamp: et br: ib de exec. D. la warr in soc p fed: et red. ‡ ld. val. 40 m. W. Bothe et Tho. Hought' fuit hered: W. Æt 16 Tho. 39. —Kuerden's MSS., p. 39. Cited in *Trans. Lanc. Antq. Soc.*, p. 19, note.





*Jailer's Chapel, Ashton Old Hall.*

## Local Customs in the Fifteenth Century.

### CHAPTER VIII.

Dawn of the Fifteenth Century—Sir John Assheton—Feudal Customs—Sources of Sir John's Income—Condition of his Tenants—Their Obligations—The Yule Feast—Hob Riding or the Gyst-ale—The Laws of the Court Baron—Riding the Black Knight, &c.

**T**HE dawn of the 15th century was so portentous, that sorrow and fear filled the hearts and shrouded the countenances of many persons who had hoped for signs of better times. The insurrectionary conduct of some of the aristocracy, the plots of Glendower and counter plots of Lord Grey—the enmity of



Northumberland, together with his son Hotspur, the most "dashing and fiery spirit" of those times—the perturbed and passionate contentions in parliament, during which the "gauntlet of defiance" was often cast on the floor, and the common parlance of the members not unfrequently included such terms as "liar" and "traitor,"—all conspired to cause great unrest and alarm, and to overcloud the early dawn of the new era. But ere the century was a quarter old, Henry IV. had passed away, and had been succeeded by Henry V., with whose accession to the throne came a time of prosperity which caused the clouds to lift and recede, clearing the horizon, and restoring confidence among all parties.

The victories which Henry V. gained in France drove his friends almost wild with enthusiasm; his statesmanship won their admiration and esteem, while the tact with which he dealt with his detractors took them often by surprise, and left them helpless to injure him. It was during this reign that Sir John Assheton distinguished himself, and became a very important person in the nation. Sir John, like his predecessors, was a lover of chivalry, and was one who volunteered to accompany Henry V. into France on his triumphant expedition. In 1417, as we have already seen, he was appointed Seneschal of Bayeux, and again in 1419, about the same time that "Dick" Whittington was Lord Mayor of London, Sir John was appointed Governor of Hadupais, and Bailiff of Constance. In 1420 the treaty of Troyes was drawn up, and Sir John is supposed to have returned home about the same time that Henry and his bride visited England. He was received by his tenants and admirers with expressions of great joy, and for a time the distinguished services he had rendered to his country, both in the field and elsewhere, were commemorated in Ashton with great feasting and hilarity.

Sir John having settled once more on his paternal estate, and feeling that he had the esteem and confidence of his lord, saw his opportunity to render his obligations to him merely nominal, and



accordingly obtained by an indenture, already given in these pages, real possession of the Manor of Assheton and its appurtenances. Having succeeded in rendering his obligations to his lord only nominal, he caused a survey of his possessions to be taken, and made a rent-roll containing the names of all his tenants and their obligations to him. This rent-roll has become one of the fullest and clearest illustrations of the manners and customs of those times. From it we obtain a very correct impression of the kind of feudalism then in vogue, and the extent to which the feudal regulations were carried in the first part of the 15th century. For many generations, it is generally admitted that the manners and customs in the Manor of Ashton were distinctly feudal, differing only from the customs of the earliest times by the variations which had taken place under the development of civilisation, the result of those inherent forces of the national life which felt the oppressive yoke, and struggled to be free; or from the customs of other places by slight variations of the feudal regulations in order to accommodate them to local circumstances.

The feudal government, therefore, existed here with its servile and degrading conditions. "The iron sway of the lord suffered no relaxation, but from the mildness of the disposition by which it was occasionally received;" and while Sir John was not one of the most offensive rulers, still he was sufficiently arbitrary to command obedience to his requirements and sufficiently stern to strike terror to the hearts of evil doers. According to his rent-roll he divided his tenants into two classes, called *Villani Soccagii* and *Liberi Soccagii*. The number of holdings in the lease of Sir John amounted to about 240; and the total number of tenants is computed to have amounted to 190, not including 11 tenants which Sir John gave to Thomas his son and heir, on the occasion of his marriage. We shall, therefore, proceed to elucidate more fully the relationship that existed between Sir John and his tenants, the manners and customs of those times, showing also the joys, sorrows, pastimes, and pleasures of his tenants, by describing—1st, The sources from which Sir John derived his

income. 2nd, The respective condition of the free tenants and tenants-at-will. 3rd, The Yule Feast. 4th, Hob Riding, or the Gyst-ale. 5th, The Laws of the Court Baron. 6th, Riding the Black Knight, &c.

#### THE SOURCES OF SIR JOHN ASSHETON'S INCOME.

Foremost among the sources of Sir John's income were the rents derived directly from his tenants for their holdings. The total sum derived from rents, &c., produced £27 12s. 11½d. This total is incorrect if the items are truly transcribed. His son's marriage portion yielded £9 2s. 7d., making a grand total of £36 15s. 6¾d. This he obtained from rents and the following other sources—1st, Tolls, a sum estimated in his rent-roll at two marks. 2nd, Fines, estimated at 3/4 each, from the following six persons for the privilege of collecting contributions at the Gyst-ale—Margret wife of Hobbe the Kynge, Hobbe Adamson, Roger the Baxter, Robart Somayster, Jenkyn of the Woode, and Thomas Curtнал, amounting in all to 20/-. One of the rustics, named Jack the Mercer, payed for the privilege of Hob-riding at the Easter feast, the sum of 6/8. 3rd, The Turvey on the Moss was chiefly in the hands of Sir John, who farmed it, so that it brought him in a sum estimated at £5. 4th, Fines from free tenants, making "ffine yearly" for "making of the milne," yielded an amount estimated at 6/- or more; while 5th, The Courts and fines incident to the administration of justice in the manor, produced the sum of 40/-. 6th. Presents at Yule, which varied from fourpence to twenty pence. The sums paid by the free tenants varied from sixpence to seven shillings and one penny. The rents of the tenants varied greatly, according to the size of their farms; the average rent may be estimated at seventeen shillings each. The cottages yielded on an average three shillings each per annum. The annual payments of the holders of the farms presented as the marriage portion of his son and heir, varied from ten to thirty shillings each.

In addition to the above, the income of Sir John was considerably augmented by the services he received at home from his

tenants termed *villani soccagii*, who were exempted from service on the "tented field;" and were compelled to plough, reap, cart turf, and serve their lord according to the feudal custom of those days, in many other ways than by tendering rent for their holdings. This manual labour was by no means a meagre source of income, and it left him free to expend as he desired the rents his holdings produced. His land was tilled, his seed sown and corn reaped, his stock constantly replenished by heriots and fines; so that Sir John, the lord of the hundreds of broad acres, which at that time constituted the manor, had at his disposal, what would be regarded as a very considerable sum in those days, which he spent in maintaining himself, and his household, with that dignity and hospitality which became a lord bearing arms in those chivalrous times.

#### SIR JOHN'S TENANTS.

Sir John's tenants were divided, as we have already seen, into two distinct classes, one called *Liberi Soccagii*, and the other termed *Villani Soccagii*. The *Liberi Soccagii* were called free tenants, not only on account of their freedom from the performance of services which were then regarded as degrading, but also because their obligations were esteemed the most honourable of those times. They were considerable in number. "Five of them leased intakes in Palden Wood, anciently the largest in the parish; others farmed the Leghes [Leys' fields, *i.e.* Lees], the Knolles [the rising grounds], and the Hursts [the thickets], from which they generally derived their names; hence we find Richard, of Bardsley; Thomas, of the Leghes; Ricus de Moston, Willielmus de Aldwinshagh, Thomas Claydon, and Petrus de Shepley." It is supposed that these lands were originally granted to the free tenants, "either in consideration of some personal service on the field of battle, or as a matter of mere accommodation to those who obtained their lord's 'love,' or as a favour to owners of contiguous manors, a slight acknowledgment of money being all that was demanded in return." The superiority of this class of tenants is also determined by the

recognition of their position by Sir John, in an ordinance in his custom and rent-roll, where he "settles the degree of precedence to be observed when their wives, daughters, and women servants take their seats at the parish church." The distinctions between these classes were not only very marked in those times, but in the hard and chivalrous days of Henry VI. often tended to create feelings of discontent among the tenants-at-will, and to make their toils not only irksome, but at times almost unendurable, since they could anticipate little or no chance of relief. But for the free tenants it was very different. The future ever held out some inviting object, and the possibility of distinction and renown on the battle-field seemed to be within the reach of any of them who aspired to military honours. "The profession of arms was," therefore, "the most enviable of all distinctions, it gave an individual that rank in society, and those privileges which could be obtained on no other condition, while husbandry languished under the opprobrium of villenage."

#### SIR JOHN'S TENANTS-AT-WILL.

These tenants are comprehended under the general term *Villani Soccagii*, and were by far the largest in number. "Of these the holders of tenements or parts of tenements amounted to 89, of cottages 25, of a cottage and garden 1, of the kilne, bakehouse, smithy, barn, and the two corn mills, 1 each." Among these tenants we find many rustic names with quaint appellations added. These appellations are indicative of low birth and menial occupations, and point most emphatically to the conditions of life under which they lived. "They were debarred from taking part in the honours of the 'tented field,' being engaged on the manor of their lord, and compelled to perform the duties of civil and agricultural drudgery." They, therefore, often suffered either on account of the severity of their lord, who sometimes "overreached the salutary laws that were made to restrain his unprovoked aggressions;" or on account of the taunts and jeers of those tenants who were more highly favoured. Hence the opprobrium cast upon such menial

employments as ploughing the lord's land, or carting the lord's fuel or manure, &c. . . . . The conditions upon which lands were rented to Sir John's tenants, are given in detail and with great clearness in the custom and rent-roll. Their holdings were taken for "twenty winter terms," and the rent was payable at two periods of the year; and were subject to a small acknowledgment of money as rent and certain conditions of service, which may be delineated as follows:—1st, They had to tender a present to their lord at Christmas for the privilege of attending the Yule Feast. It was enjoined "that they should give their presents at Yule; every present to such a value as is written in the said rental; and the lord shall feed all the said tenants and their wives, upon Yule Day at dinner, &c." Among the sums named as presents we find 20d., 16d., 8d., 12d., 4d., &c. 2nd, They were compelled to plough the lord's land a certain number of days in each year, as the lord should direct, namely, "Every tenant that plough has shall plough two days, and he that half a plough has shall plough a day, whether the lord be-liever in wheat seeding or in Lenten seeding." 3rd, Another condition was that they should harrow; "Every tenant a day, in seeding time when they bin charged." 4th, They were also to cart turf from the Moss for the lord's use, as follows:—"Every tenant shall cart *ten cart full* of turve fro Done—a Moss, to Ashton." 5th, They were to shear four days in harvest, and cart corn for their lord one full day. 6th, They were prohibited from grinding at any other mill but their lord's mill; while their lord's corn had always to be ground first before that of any other person. The 7th and last condition was the more hurtful and intolerable than all, namely, the condition which bound each tenant to pay a heriot at death. "The custom of heriotship," says Roby, "was the most oppressive, being paid and exacted from the parties at a time when they were least able to render it." "As in the case of a military vassal, or tenant by Knight-service, his horse was the heriot due to his lord at death; so the custom became extended to that class of dependants who were retained in the lord's employ to perform the busier services

of the manor. As their property consisted of cattle, or of implements of husbandry, the heriot due to the lord was the best beast, cow or horse, of which the tenant might die possessed. This condition being fulfilled, every further claim upon the goods of the deceased was remitted. This obnoxious custom was at times most galling, and caused not unfrequently great trouble and sorrow among the poorest classes of society. The priest, as well as the lord of the manor, claimed his heriot, called a mortuary in these early times, on the death of his parishioners, as a kind of expiation for the personal tithes which the deceased in his lifetime had neglected to pay." Anciently it was the custom to lead, or drive the horse, or cow, before the corpse of the deceased, at the funeral. Generally the lord took the best beast, and the second best, if any, was given to the church. But by the custom of the Manor of Ashton, strange to say, this order was reversed, and the parishioner's family was to pay at his death the *best beast* he had to his lord, "*next after the holy kirk.*" "This was originally," says Baines, "a voluntary gift, and hence called a *corse present*, but afterwards grew into a claim, and was insisted upon by the clergy till the time of the Reformation, when it was enacted that no mortuaries or corse presents, to persons of any parish, should exceed ten shillings; that persons not leaving goods to the value of ten marks should not be liable to any mortuary; that those leaving goods of the value of from ten marks to £30, should pay 3s. 4d.; if above £30 and under £40, the payment to be 6s. 8d.; and for any higher value, 10s. In the Archdeaconry of Chester, in this diocese, a custom prevailed that the Bishop of Chester, who was also Archdeacon, should have, at the death of every clergyman dying within the archdeaconry, his best horse or mare, bridle, saddle and spurs; his best gown or cloak, hat, upper garment under his gown, and tippet, and also his best signet or ring; but by 48 Geo. II. this Ecclesiastical mortuary was directed to cease, and the Act settled upon the Bishop a somewhat inadequate equivalent in its stead."<sup>(1)</sup> "This custom,"

(1.) Baines' *Hist. of Lanc.*, vol. ii., p. 545, Ed. 1836.

says Roby in another place, "fell with great severity upon widows in poor circumstances, who were, in too many instances, thus deprived of their only means of subsistence. Then came the fees to the holy church, so that the bereaved and disconsolate creature had need to wish herself in the dark dwelling beside her husband." Roby continues, aptly quoting the antique lines of Sir David Lindsay, illustrative of "the exactions and enormities committed on these defenceless and unoffending victims of their rapacity"—

And also the vicar, as I trow,  
Will not fail to take a cow,  
And uppermost cloths, though babes them an,  
From a poor seely husbandman,  
When he lyes ready to dy,  
Having small children two or three,  
And his three kine withouten mo,—  
The vicar must have one of tho,  
With the grey cloke that covers the bed,  
Howbeit that they be poorly cled :  
And if the wife die in the morn,  
And all the babes should be forlorn,  
The other cow he takes away,  
With her poor cote and petycote gray.  
And if within two days or three

The eldest child shall happen to dy,  
Of the third cow he shall be sure,  
When he hath under his cure ;  
And father and mother both dead be,  
Beg must the babes without remedy.  
They hold the corse at the church stile,  
And there it must remain awhile,  
Till they get sufficient surety  
For the church right and duty.  
Then comes the landlord perforce,  
And takes to him the fattest horse ;  
Poor labourers would that law were down,  
Which never was founded by reason.  
I heard them say, under confession,  
That this law was brother to oppression.



*The Imp at the Yule Feast.*

## THE LORD'S YULE FEAST.

"England was merry England when  
 Old Christmas brought his sports again:  
 'Twas Christmas broached the mightiest ale:  
 'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale—  
 A Christmas gambol oft would cheer  
 A poor man's heart through half the year."

This feast, called the Yule Feast,<sup>(1)</sup> was held during the Christmas-tide; and in different parts of Lancashire was celebrated with great rejoicing. In the rent-roll of Sir John de Assheton, 1422, occurs the following passage relative to this annual feast at the Manorial Hall, of Ashton-under-Lyne:—"The service of the said tenants is this, that they shall give their presents at the Yole. Every present to such a value, as it is written and sett in the rental, and the lord shall ffeed all his said tenants and their wives upon Yole day at the dinner, if them like to come, but the said tenants and their wives, though it be for their ease not for to come, they shall send neither man nor woman in their name, but if he be a son other than daughter dwelling with them unto the dinner, ffor the lord is not bounden to ffeed all save only the good man and the good wife." Dr. Hibbert Ware says, "That the particular services of the tenants-at-will were, first, to return a present to the lord at the Yole or Christmas, for the sake of partaking in the annual feast of the great hall." From the above passage it would appear that in Ashton-under-Lyne these presents were claimed as an obligatory service from Sir John Assheton's tenants-at-will. The real origin of this service is doubtful. Dr. Hibbert Ware held the opinion that "The Scandinavians who peopled the province of Normandy, and afterwards became the conquerors of England, knew no other tribute in the country from which they emerged than one which was of the

(1.) The *Yule Feast* was a kind of Saturnalia, where all were considered on a level, landlord and tenant, as ancient, as Mrs. Bryant conceives, as the time of Noah, and meant to indicate the social manner in which that patriarch lived with his family, when he was instructing them in the art of husbandry. It is synonymous with the word *Ale*, which is always used in a festive sense, as *Bride-Ale*, *Church-Ale*, &c. In Yorkshire and some parts of Lancashire it is the custom to place a large log of wood on the fire, on the night of Christmas Eve, which is called the "Yule-log," and for all the members of the family on that night to partake of a mess of creed-wheat, boiled in milk, and seasoned with spice, called *Furmenty*.—*Hist. of Lanc.*, Baines, vol. ii., p. 543, note, Ed. 1836.



nature of a capitation tax;" and adds, "It is not improbable that in subduing England, they subjected their newly-acquired Saxon vassals to the same impost to which they themselves had been accustomed, by inserting it in their rentals. We accordingly find traces of this, the most ancient of all duties, in the old rent-rolls of many manors in England. The mode of collecting such a capitation tax was by requiring an annual present from the tenants at Christmas, that was spent in providing a treat, in which both the landlord and his vassals partook." The same authority gives us the following interesting description of the Yule Feast:—"In some of the Manor-houses of Lancashire, once dedicated to those annual scenes of festivity, may be observed an elevation of the floor [or daïs] at the extremity of the great-hall, or, in place of it a gallery which stretches along one side of the room, to accommodate the lord and his family, so that they might not be annoyed by the coarse rustic freedoms which the tenants would be apt to take during the hours of their conviviality. In a hall, then, of this kind, in the Manor-house at Assheton, we may imagine the large Yule fire to be kindled; while in a gallery or raised floor Sir John Assheton, his lady, and family, together with his kinsmen, Elland of Brighthouse, and Sir John Byron, are feasting apart, yet attentive to the frolics or old songs of the company below. It was on these occasions that pig [peg] tankards were used, and horns that bore the names of the Saxons and Danes whom the Normans had ousted out of their possessions. Of the description of the ale that flowed merrily on these occasions we know little; but there can be no doubt that it was like King Henry the Eighth's ale, which contained neither hops nor brimstone. We may suppose, then, that on annual festivals like these, the wooden bowl or horn would pass freely through the hands of Sir John's tenants-at-will; among whom were such personages as Hobbe Adamson, Hobbe of the Leghes, William the Arrow-smith, Roger the Baxter, Roger le Smith, Jack the Spencer, Jack the Hind, Elyn Wilkyn daughter, Elyn the Rose, and the Widows Mergot of Stayley, Peryn's wife, and Nan of the Windy Bank—

all clad in their best hoods, and brown woollen jackets and petticoats. The ancient musical instruments used in Lancashire were a kind of fiddle, not of the present form, and a stringed instrument called the *virginals*. The provincial songs of that period, few of which lasted less than half-an-hour, rehearsed the deeds of Launcelot du Lake, and his conquest of the great Giant Tarquin, at the Castle of Manchester; Ranulph of Chester, and his wars in the Holy Land; or the war-like feats and amorous prowess of the renowned Cheshire hero, Roger de Calverley. In order to preserve, as much as possible, the degree of decorum that was necessary at such meetings, there was frequently introduced a diminutive pair of stocks, of about 18 inches in length, for confining within them the fingers of the unruly. This instrument was entrusted to the general prefect of manorial festivities, named the King of Misrule, whose office it was to punish all who exceeded his royal notions of decency. Accordingly such a character appears among the list of Sir John Assheton's tenants, under the name of Hobbe the King. A festivity of this kind wrung from the pockets of the vassals, acquired in derision the appellation of *drink-lean*." It is evident, from an examination of the presents collected for these drink-leans, that, if they did not leave a handsome surplus to the lord, they would, at least, pay the expenses of the table. Accordingly, it is not improbable that the name *land-lord* was originally attached to the host of an inn as a satirical allusion to the manorial land-lord, who never provided a dinner for his guests without receiving for it an adequate recompense.

Another graphic sketch has been preserved of the Christmas festivities in olden time, from which we give the following quotation :—

"It was Christmas in the year 1422. A bright, clear, crisp, frosty morning it was that ushered in Old Christmas at that time as ever merry eye looked upon. The pendent icicles, radiant with a thousand hues, glittered on the eaves; and the light fall of snow on the previcus night, but barely covering the scanty herbage left, felt sharp and crisp beneath the wayfarers' passing footsteps. The

feathered creation alone were mute, but occasionally stood upon one leg whilst the other leg sought warmth amongst the feathers. The air was sharp and piercing, and human beings hurried on hastily, as though business of importance was pending on their speed. Even the little urchin ran briskly on, blowing his finger ends, or burying them in his pockets and taking a slide as he progressed, or occasionally indulging in saluting some companion with a snowball. The inmates of the Old Hall were early astir on that eventful morning. Such a turmoil and bustle was only to be seen once a year. The very air was redolent of flavours from roast, boiled, fried, and stewed, and had been for two days past. The stout October ale was made ready to draw, and guaranteed innocent of hops and brimstone. Beakers were scoured, flagons brightened, benches and trestles washed down, and the floors strewn with dry rushes. Work and mirth went merrily on together, and the yule feast promised fair for that day. Sir John and Lady Assheton looked as joyous as any of their dependents. Honoured guests had been pouring in during the last two days, amongst whom were the Davenports, Stanleys, Ellands, Byrons, Staveleighs, Booths, Talbots, Traffords, and many more, all bent on merriment and good feasting. As the day wore on the free tenants, tenants-at-will, vassals, serfs, and dependents of every grade came thronging to the one general rendezvous. All were met with a hearty welcome. And well they might; for Sir John's farm fees, tolls, fines, soccage, heriots, and yule presents had come in freely, which induced him to add a large and handsome *largesse*, again increased by his lady in honour of her invited guests. The prospect was cheering, and much fun and frolic was expected by all. The great yule fire was kindled, and the mighty yule log introduced with great ceremony, and mounted on the burning taggots, accompanied by cheers and waving of caps and cudgels. The dais became crowded with guests, and the lower hall was filled with merry faces. The trestles and tables were loaded with every variety of provisions—huge sirloins, saddles, haunches, and venison pasties; whilst ortolans, chickens, pheasants, turkeys, &c., were placed

near the lady of the guests. Tankards, beakers, black-jacks, and wassail horns were soon filled with foaming ale; whilst the vast crowd, dressed in their best holiday attire—hoods, caps, kirtles, jackets, and petticoats, seemed all bent, first on feasting, and then on fun, frolic and games; and during all this toasts, songs, and jests flew about right merrily. In one corner sat a group listening to tales of Launcelot du Lake, Giant Tarquin, Ranulph of Chester, and Roger de Calverley. In another corner the ancient Lancashire fiddler and virginals gave out merry strains to help the young ones in dance or song. In a third, Roger de Smyth was talking in loud tones to Nan of the Windy Bank; and Mally, the widow of Dixon Higgeson, seemed equally pleased with the whisperings of Robyn Somayster. Whilst amidst all this bustle and confusion the busy wight, Hob, of the Mabholes, as the Lord of Misrule, flitted here and there on his hobby, threatening the too coarse jester with a taste of the thumb-screw, which he shook merrily in their faces. Such was Christmas in those days of feudal pomp and power.”

But how great the change which has taken place since those days! The Old Hall, like other stately remnants of the past, has lost its charms in respect of the celebrations above narrated. The Christmas of yore has passed away; and those who could enliven and inspire our rising generation with reverential feelings at such a happy season, enjoy this pastime in other places, while their successors have found other methods of real enjoyment. Our “Old ancestral halls” are not what they used to be, but we have this compensation, the homes of our artizans are more happy and enlightened, free from feudal tyranny, and from the yoke which made them serfs to their “lord and master.” What heart does not leap with gladness at the approach of Christmas, endeared to us by the highest and holiest event in the world’s history? How the nipping air, the clear frost, the intense stars, the brilliant light add to the general enjoyment! The maskings and mummary are gone, but we have pleasures which afford substitutes as joyous, but more elevating than the customs of old. We can be merry without buffoonery,

and feast without excess. Have we not in this day memories to cherish and hopes to inspire us as we gather with our friends around the Christmas fire? Have we no joke, laughter, repartee, bright eyes, comedies, songs, and carols? Surely, if many old usages have become obsolete, we have something better in exchange, while Christmas still retains for us sports and pastimes, usages and revelries of a simpler kind, but not the less hearty or rational.



#### HOB-RIDING, OR THE GYST ALE.

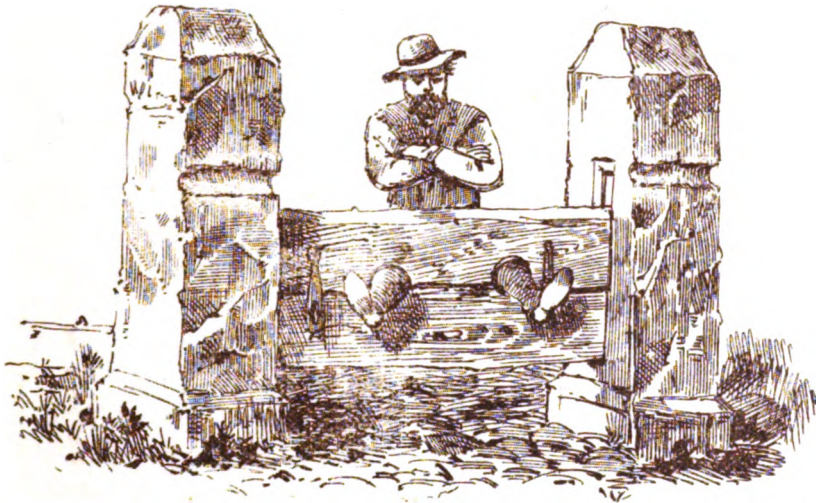
The great holiday of the year in Ashton, in olden times, was held in the Spring time, and was termed the "Gyst-Ale, or Guising Feast." This annual festival was celebrated with great rejoicing, and attended sometimes with drunkenness and rioting. "Hence," says Baines, "the ancient festival of Guising, which took place in the Spring time, and which was therefore called *Marling* (in allusion to that operation in husbandry being completed), has long ceased in the parish, to the regret of the holiday keepers, but by no means to the detriment of the public peace, and to the sobriety and good order of the inhabitants." On this occasion the rustics assembled in great numbers from the surrounding district for many miles. It appears from the rental of Sir John de Assheton that the sum of twenty shillings was paid to him, as Lord of the Manor, for the privilege of holding this feast by those who conducted it. The persons named are—Margret, that was the wife of Hobbe, the Kynge (of Misrule); Hobbe Adamson, Roger the Baxter, Robert Somayster, Jenkyn of the Wood; and Thomas of Curtнал. The meaning of the term, "Gyst Ale," is involved in some obscurity, and the custom itself

is not mentioned by either Brand or Ellis in their collections of popular antiquities. Most probably the payments mentioned above were for the *Gyst*, or hire, for the privilege of selling ale or other refreshments during the festivals held on the payment of the rents of the Manor. These *guisings* may very likely have been held about Lady-day, when the manorial rents were usually paid. For the celebration of this feast large sums of money were subscribed by all ranks of society that it might be held with becoming splendour. The Lord of the Manor, the Vicar of the Parish, the squire, and the farmer and workman, severally announced the sums they intended to contribute, and when the treasurer declared the result he exclaimed, "*A largesse!*" whereupon the collectors immediately demanded, "From whom?" and then it was pretended to proclaim the sum collected. The real amount was seldom, if ever, announced, but it was vauntingly declared that "Lord John," or some other equally distinguished person had contributed "a portion of ten thousand pounds" towards the expenses of the feast. After the subscription lists were closed the rustics might be seen coming in every direction from places both near and remote, bearing in their hands the choicest flowers of the season, while others brought all kinds of silver articles, medals, plate, brooches, and various other trinkets which they had borrowed from the rich residents of the town. They next proceeded to make an immense garland, which they decorated with an abundance of every flower in season, interspersed with a profusion of evergreens and ribbons of many shades and patterns. The framework of this garland was made of wood, to which they affixed hooks, and on these they suspended their plate, and multifarious trinkets.

The day of celebration at length arrives. The whole parish is astir at an early hour. The rustics crowd in by every available road from the surrounding country. The hour for starting has at length come—the order is given by the Master of the Ceremonies—the garland is hoisted amidst the din and noise of the multitude. A procession of villagers, who are

overwhelmed with rustic finery, is formed, and all are in readiness to start; but still they linger. Why do they hesitate? Just then you behold, coming in the distance, a person dressed in a grotesque cap; as he comes nearer you discern his face covered with a hideous grinning mask; behind he has a long tail hanging, and a bell with which he commands attention when about to speak. This is the Fool! He is now mounted upon a horse, and causes the whole multitude to burst into fits of laughter by his jests and grotesque pranks as he passes along. The shouts of the townsfolk and the yells of the rustics who everywhere crowd the principal thoroughfares, greet him wherever he goes. Once the procession is ended, the visitors make merry over their pewters of ale, and the day ends, as it too often had done, in scenes of debauchery and rioting. From this we get the origin of the term "Hob-riding," and more recently the proverbial expression of, "Riding one's hobby to death."

In the Manor Roll, from which we have previously quoted, it is stated that "Jack, the Mercer, paid the Lord of the Manor the annual sum of 6s. 8d. for the privilege of Hob-riding;" and the office appears to have become a lucrative one, when rivalry between towns and villages was excited. On such occasions the inhabitants spared neither time nor expense to outshine their neighbours—so much so that a single village has been known to spend several thousand pounds on this unmeaning display. At what date this custom ceased to exist we cannot now determine with certainty; but it is clear, as we have already seen from the Rent Roll of Sir John Assheton, that Hob-riding was practised in 1422, and was a very popular resort for the people of the surrounding district, and considerably lucrative. But shortly after the above date we lose all trace of this annual festival, and immediately meet with another demonstration held on the same day, and entitled, "Riding the Black Knight." Hence, it has been conjectured that "Riding the Black Lad," as it is sometimes designated, supplanted Hob-riding, and became, for some reason, more popular, and consequently more remunerative.



*Ashton Old Stocks in the last century.*



*Ashton Old Stocks, now in possession of I. W. Boulton, Esq.*



## THE LAWS OF THE COURT BARON.

Two of the most striking peculiarities of the feudal regulations were—first, the substitution of service for money, which we have already noticed; and, second, the substitution of local authority for national law. We have seen how the King held all his subjects, either directly or indirectly, bound to himself by various obligations of service. The next point, therefore, for us to notice is, how the law was administered in those days of yore. First, the King held his great Court at Westminster Hall, where the greater Barons were compelled on certain occasions to meet him to renew their allegiance and to assist him in the administration of justice, &c., which tended to the common weal. Next, these greater Barons fixed their seats at their great castles, or places of residence, where they held their Court, and compelled their tenants, the lesser Barons, to acknowledge their allegiance to them, and help them to administer such laws as the King allowed them, and pass judgment in such cases as the King permitted them to adjudicate. Then last of all the lesser Barons and Lords of Manors held their Courts in their Manors, and administered justice among their tenants, and secured their allegiance, whether comprehended under the term *Villani Soccagii*, or *Liberi Soccagii*. “It was the distinguishing feature of the feudal system to make civil jurisdiction necessarily, and criminal jurisdiction ordinarily, co-extensive with tenure; and accordingly there was inseparably a Court Baron incident to every manor, being a court in which the freeholders of the Manor were the sole judges, but in which the Lord, by himself, or more commonly by his steward, presided. The jurisdiction of the Court Baron extended over all personal actions in which the debt or damages sought to be recovered were under 40s. Real actions in respect of lands held at the Manor could not be brought into any other court, except upon allegation that the Lord of the Manor had, in the particular instance, granted or abandoned his court to the King.” As this court was essential to the due administration of justice in

questions respecting the rights of property held of the Manor arising amongst the Lord's tenants, there could never have been a perfect Manor without sufficient freeholders to constitute a Court Baron, which number must consist of three, or two at least, three being necessary where the litigation was between freeholders. "In the earliest history of the Norman tenures," says Dr. Hibbert Ware, "the Lord of Ashton had absolute power of life and death. Strong dungeons were constructed near the Manor-house, the remains of which still appear; and a meadow near the town, still called 'Gallows Field,' was selected as a place of summary execution. But as civil liberty gained ground, the severity of the feudal system was ameliorated by the institution of Court Baron, which, in time, became necessary to constitute a Manor."

The following is an outline of the customs and bye-laws pertaining to the courts of some of the Manors in the fifteenth century for the preservation of order and propriety among the tenants:

1st. They were engaged to maintain their farms in good condition.

2nd. To grind their corn at the Lord's mill. If any one sold corn growing on his farm, and secretly bought corn from another of Sir John's tenants, and represented the corn to be bought from another Manor, and therefore only liable to be taxed by the miller to the amount of the "Love Socome," or twenty-fourth vessel, having been dried by other than the Lord's fuel, instead of the sixteenth vessel, as was his right, such offender, on being convicted, was fined at the Lord's will. "Nothing," says Baines, "indicates more strongly the almost immeasurable distance between lord and vassals than those soke privileges; not only were the tenants required to grind their grain at the Lord's mill on terms of his own prescribing, but when the Lord's corn 'came to the mill' the miller was to 'put all men out of their grist, and take their corn out of the hopper that his corn might be ground next before all men, for which he was required to make no payment or mulcture to the miller, but such as he list.'"

3rd. The consent of the free tenants to be "infeoffed in the Hall mote of Assheton, after the customs and burgales of the town" is recorded in Sir John's custom and rent-roll. This was a special feature of the Court Baron; and we find that in Ashton in those days the free tenants were not in any way averse to acting on the inquest with the tenants at will.

4th. Sir John's tenants invested him with power to distress by his bailiff persons convicted by inquest of trespassing upon their lands. If the offender had no goods, and could not be distressed, the next remedy was the stocks, which were not unfrequently used in those days for the punishment of offences committed by the poorest tenants, the Villani Soccagii. When persons came into the Manor from other places and committed trespass, or became unruly and were bent on being mischievous and doing harm, they were to be "overcome" by a body of residents in the Manor, who were responsible for such an arrest. If the wrong doer became obstinate or in any way dangerous, and the stocks had failed to work the necessary reformation, then they had a most summary way of dealing with such, which had the desired effect. When the offender had been convicted several times, and had become so obdurate as to be regarded as utterly incorrigible, then it was enacted that he should be executed the next time he was convicted of any crime by the person against whom he had offended.

5th. In order to secure the convicted one, and to bring to justice any guilty person, the tenants also engaged that whosoever knowingly concealed a transgressor, or was remiss in securing him, or in bringing the same to justice, "should bring upon himself the amercements of the Court Baron."

6th. To secure loyalty to the sovereign of the realm and devotion to the Lord, it was enacted that if any tenant became a rebel he should be immediately executed, or, in the event of his escape, he should forfeit all claim to protection in the Manor or Parish, and his property should be confiscated. Again, if any free

tenants “dared to dispute the customs of the Manor they deservedly incurred the loss of their tenements, and also the love or favour of their superior.

7th. As a safeguard against drunken brawls, fighting, and any indecorous acts, it was enacted by the court in some Manors that, for the first offence, the offender should be set in the stocks or be liable to a penalty of half a mark; if still contumacious he forfeited a mark; but for the third violation of the peace he was fined a sum amounting to not less than twenty shillings. If any person connived at any disturbance, or acted as the seconder, or “resetter” as he was then called, he also was liable to be punished or fined according to the will and direction of the inquest for his officiousness.

Perhaps in no Manor has there been preserved such a complete digest of the laws and regulations of the Court Baron in the fifteenth century, as we have in the Custom Roll of Sir John Assheton. We therefore insert it that the reader may have as complete an idea as possible of the sort of life the people lived in that remote era, and more truly appreciate the advancement that has been made in civilisation:—

“The tenants-at-will of the said Lordship of Assheton, have taken their holdings and their places XX Winter Terme; as it is afore rehearsed, and in this form, that if any tenant or tenants list not to hold their holdings, within their terme that they sit in, and they like to give up their places or their holdings at the Martinmas; the Lord shall receive them at the Martinmas next after: with this, that the said tenant or tenants leave their places, their houses, and their closes, able as they ought to be, and their land in the field as able and as good, a tenant for to take, as it was at their taking, in the beginning of their terme of years, and if they do not, it shall be overseen by four or six men sworne, the which shall be taken by the Lord and his officers. And they shall sett, by their consciences, what would repair the houses and the closes, and, if the Lord belikes, he shall take that money that is sett, and repair the houses and the closes. And if the Lord like not so to do, the tenant that is to come shall take it, if him like, and, if he like not, the four or six men sworne shall take the money that they have sett, and repair the houses and the closes; able as they ought to be repaired. And this rule and custom shall be had when as ever any tenant

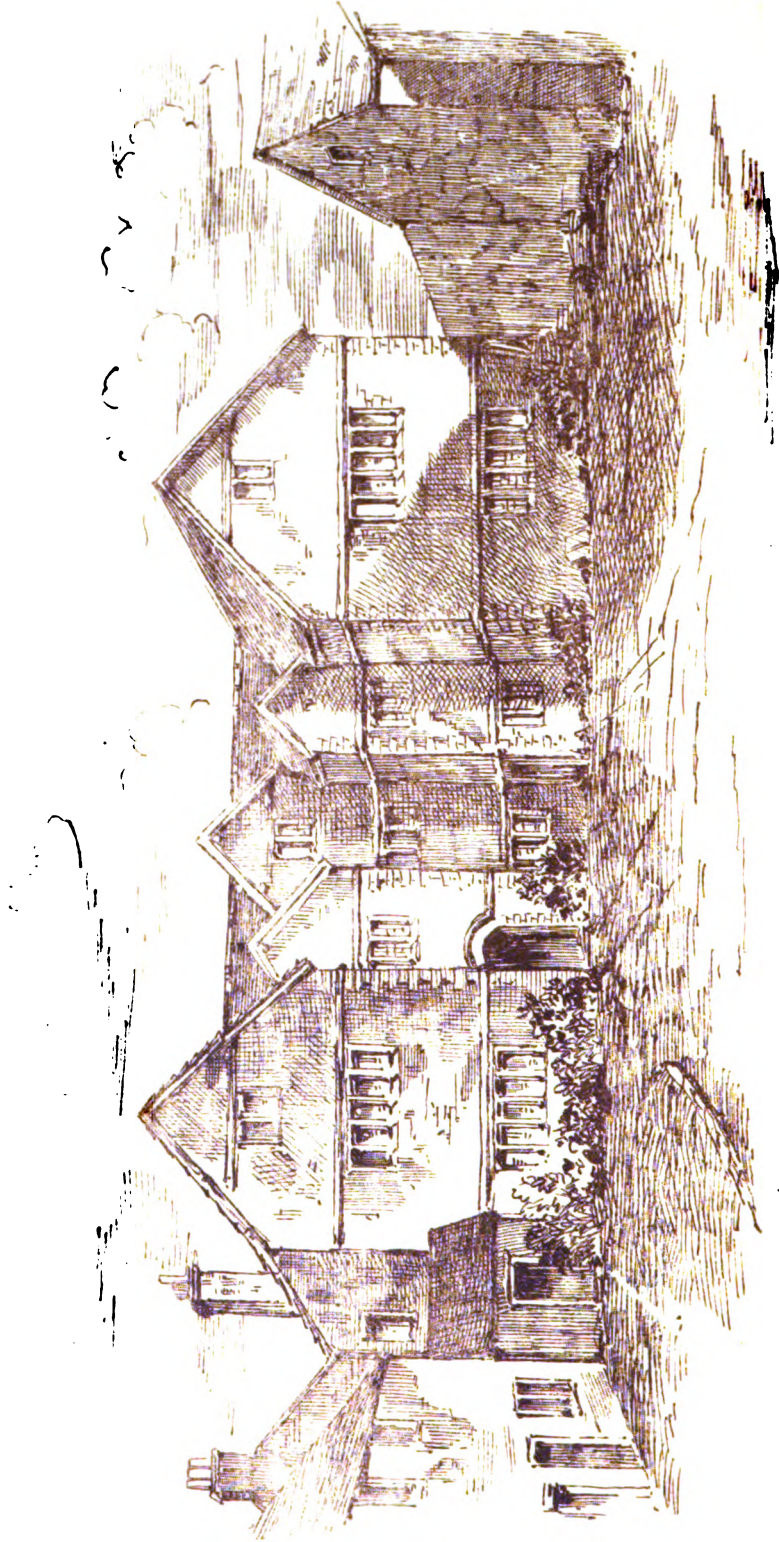
removes, be it within the term, or at the terme end. And as touching the Land that lies to the place, these four or six men sworne shall sett, by their conscience, what they hold the land worse yearly a tenant for to take, than it was at taking of tenant that removes, and as many years as is behind of his term, of so mickle shall the tenant that removes answer to the Lord if he removes fro his place within his terme, according to the sum sett by the sworne men. But it shall be well understanden, that if the tenant hold his land unto the terme, and remove unto another place at the terme end: the houses and the closes shall be seen in the form as is before-said, but the land in the fields shall not be seen or sett as is before rehearsed; unless the tenant by fraud and upon purpose, crede his land of miss unreasonably, or done to his holding other diverse harme upon malice and for evil will.

“Also, the tenants-at-will of the said Lordship, shall multer at the sixteenth vessel, and go to none other milne, but to the Lord's milnes, and which of them that is found guilty of going to any other milne, they shall be highly amerced, and make fine at the Lord's will; and the free tenants that oghen soken to the milne, shall multed as their chartours will, and as they have been accustomed of old time. And the free tenants, and the tenants-at-will, shall give the milner his service at all times, as it has been accustomed aforetime always, and if there be any default in the milner's service, that may be proved lawfully, he shall be punished highly by the Lord at his Courts, as the law and the customs will, and as has been used aforetime. And the customs of the milne shall be kept, every man to keep his grist as has been used aforetime, and when the Lord's corn come to the milne, he shall put all men out of their grist, and take their corn out of the hopper if any be therein. And his corn shall be ground next at all times before all men, when it comes to the milne, without multer or paying service to the milner, but at his lyst if he likes, and curtasy, to give to the said milner.

“The free tenants of the Lordship of Assheton have granted to John of Assheton, Knight, for to be Infeoffed in the Hall mote of Assheton, after the customs and the burgales of the aforesaid town, to term of their lives out taken, that they will not swear upon the Inquest between the tenants-at-will at the suit of party, but they will swear between free tenants and tenants-at-will, that is to witt, six of the free tenants, and six of the tenants-at-will. And also, between the Lord and free tenants, and tenants-at-will. And also, the aforesaid free tenants and all tenants, grants, for to hold the Ordinances and the Customs before-time made and used, and the which afterward are to be made by the grant of them, to the Lord's profit and the tenants aforesaid.

“And the aforesaid free tenants, and the tenants-at-will of the Manor of Assheton, grants to John of Assheton, Knight, that if any of them be convicted by Inquest of any trespass done to others in his beginning, and of his own





**STAYLEY OLD HALL.**  
*Formerly one of the Seats of the Bootles.*







wrong, that then the Lord of the Town, by his Bailey, shall distrain him by his goods by Great Distresse, unto the time that he have amended it reasonably to the party grieved. And also to the Lord for the trespass, at his will, if the trespasser have goods within the Lordship. And if that he have none, then the Lord of the Town, or his Bailey, shall take him with strength of the foresaid free tenants and tenants-at-will, and sett him in the stocks unto the time that he have amended unto the party grieved, and to the Lord.

“ And also they grant the aforesaid free tenants and tenants-at-will, and all that dwell in the foresaid town, that if any man of any other town or towns, come within the foresaid town for to do any harm to any tenants resident within the town, that anon all the tenants and residents foresaid, within the foresaid town shall rise, with their neighbours, to take and arrest the foresaid trespasser unto their power, after that they be warned by their neighbours, or by the Lord's Bailey, or by any man. Fro that time that there be knowing of such a misdoer. And if any of the foresaid tenants and residents refuse so to do in the form foresaid, then will all the tenants and the residents foresaid that afterward of that deed, or any of them, be convicted in the Lord's Court by Inquest, that he so convicted shall give to the Lord forty shillings, within fifteen days then next following, and that the Lord's Bailey shall raise the forfeit, forty shillings, of the goods of them that are convicted. And also they grant, that if any of them resette or mantain any strange man after that day, knowing that he have done trespass to any tenant or resident aforesaid, within the towne aforesaid, then he shall give to the Lord of the Town, forty shillings, of his goods to be raised by the Bailey in the town aforesaid, after that he be convicted by the Inquest.

“ And also the tenants-at-will grant to the foresaid John of Assheton, Knight, that if any of them were rebel, and would not be justified after the Custom and Ordinance of the foresaid town, now made and before time used, that then he shall lose the term of his lands to the foresaid, and shall be removed out of the Lord's land, and the parishe of Assheton. And the foresaid John, grants to the foresaid tenants-at-will, that if there be any free tenants that will not be justified after the Custom and Ordinance of the foresaid town, that he shall not mantain him nor help him, but he shall remove him out of his service, and he shall loose his Love. Also, the foresaid tenants and residents, will and grantyn, that if there be any fighter among them, the which shall fight with another in his beginning, after that he be convicted by Inquest, then he convicted, shall give to the Lord half a mark the first time, and if he will not be chastyed by that, the second time he shall give to the Lord a mark, after that he be convicted by the Inquest: and if he will not be chastyed by that, the third time he shall give the Lord twenty

A—IV.

shillings, after that he be convicted by the Inquest, to be raised by the Lord's Bailey.

"Also, they give and grantyn, that if there be any tenant or resident within the foresaid town, that have resetted any fighter with other in his beginning, that the resetter after he be convicted by the Inquest, shall amend it to the party grieved, and he shall give to the Lord the pains sette upon him as before is written."

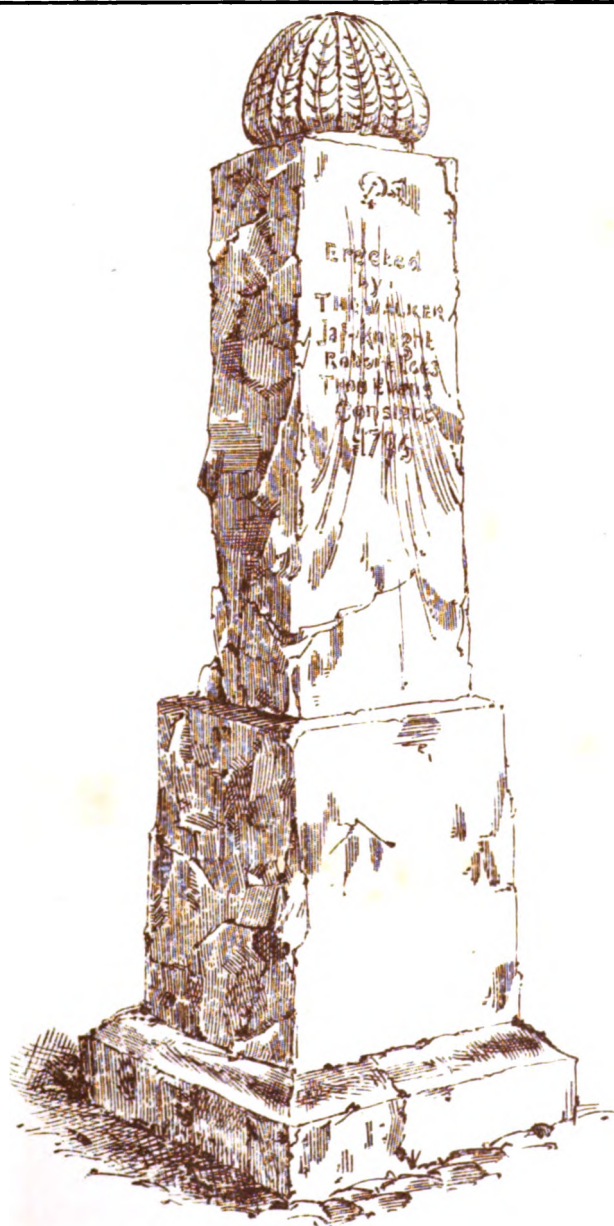
### "THE BLACK KNIGHT."

Of all the customs which have come down to us from days of yore there is none, perhaps, more remarkable than the annual custom of "Riding the Black Knight," still so popular in the Borough of Ashton-under-Lyne. This demonstration takes place on Easter Monday, at which time the town is visited by crowds of people from the surrounding towns and villages. The ceremony is, however, becoming less attractive year by year. As we get further removed from the period in which it was originated, the tendency to drift from the original conception of the demonstration becomes more evident. This may be owing partly to the fact that the populace seem to have no clear conception of what the ceremony was intended in the first instance to commemorate, and partly to the ever increasing demand for novelty. Hence in the present day it is the habit of the prime movers in this demonstration to fix on any notorious character, and submit his effigy to the ridicule and opprobrium of the populace.

The primary object of this demonstration, according to best received and most probable accounts, was to perpetuate the feelings of detestation which the inhabitants of the parish entertained towards the wanton acts of tyranny of some person unknown, when the arbitrary sway of the feudal lord was diminishing before the comparative independence and liberty of speech of all classes.<sup>(1)</sup> Years back the figure consisted in an "effigy made of straw, &c., to represent a man in black armour, and this image was deridngly emblazoned with some emblem of the occupation of the first<sup>(2)</sup> couple that were married in the course of the year. The

(1.) *Hist. of Ashton.* Butterworth, 1842. p. 46.

(2.) Butterworth says "last couple;" also "initials" not "emblems of occupation."



*Ashton Old Cross. now in possession of I. W. Boulton, Esq.*

Black Boy, as it is sometimes designated, was then fixed on horseback, and after being led through the streets of the town, was dismounted and made to supply the place of a shooting-butt, all sorts of firearms being in requisition for the occasion, and was put to an ignominious end." Still later when the use of firearms had been discarded, the principal performers in the ceremony took the effigy of the Black Knight from the back of the horse it had ridden, and suspended it by the head from a hook in the Old Cross, where it was mutilated with swords and other instruments of war to the utter delight of the bystanders. But in the present day the ceremony has lost much of its ancient appearance, for sometimes, instead of an effigy, several "Knights" appear in the shape of some thirsty townsmen, who are paraded through the streets, not forgetting to stop at every public-house on the way, when it is expected that the hospitable landlord shall contribute a certain well known measure of ale to slake the thirst of "his honour" and distinguished attendants. This year [1884] there were no fewer than four competitors, who vied with each other for the attentions of the buxom landlady, or the sympathy and generosity of the landlord. The *Ashton Reporter* for April 19th, 1884, contains a graphic description of the Easter festivities, from which we insert the following quotation :—

The anniversary of the Black Knight was kept up in Ashton this year with such abridged ceremonials as have survived the multiplied disasters to which many another picturesque and popular custom has been obliged to submit. As it is, there still remains enough to attract crowds to Ashton, and we must endeavour, from a very hurried glance at the knights, to describe what the "people went out for to see." The same human characteristics which preclude the possibility of uniformity in the church or in politics, prevent the people of Ashton adhering to simply one "Black Knight." They must have several. First, then, we put the brass-helmeted effigy, stuck on the back of a large cart-horse, with elephantine legs. The animal has been so frequently at the job of yore, that he appears to relish the distinction, and to know that he has upon his back a knight of no small consequence. But his honour has a most uneasy seat. As his brazen helmet looms in the distance, over a broad pair of mantled shoulders, the image is seen to bob up and down at every stride, and to sway very much on one side, like a vessel with

all sails crowded on ready to capsize. His worship, however, is too well moored to come to grief in that way, and he jolts through the streets all day most comically.

The second competitor rode about in a gig, in which he leans far back, displaying, perhaps, the best got up habiliments, and perhaps the best idea of what Sir Ralph of Ashton really was in his panoply of armour, but that mark of respectability, a gig, is too great an anachronism to be tolerated. A cart horse, in the absence of a war-charger, is more in the knightly line.

A third Knight was elaborately got up to represent Osman Digna. This was quite a new effigy and deserves a word of encouragement for the originality of the idea, but the chieftain's costumier either had a very hazy idea of how to dress an Arab chief, or was hampered by an exceedingly limited supply of materials. Osman was arrayed in an ordinary black coat and waistcoat. Over this a flowered table cloth was drawn, and the breeches were of a still more ornamental description. The head was like those huge ones sometimes seen in burlesques, of exaggerated proportions, and surmounted by a Turkish fez. He had in one hand a tin battle axe, and in the other hand a tin shield, too small, however, to protect the huge orbicular countenance of its master. This black lad was also seated in a gig, and the necessary precaution had been taken of labelling the production back and front "Osman Digna," because otherwise there was not the remotest possibility of any sane man ever stumbling upon the improbable conception that the fanatical sheikh of the desert was intended to be designated by such a fortuitous conglomeration of the costumes of all nations.

The last knight we saw must be dismissed with a line; he was a lad with blackened face, astride a pony, and he claimed also to be Osman Digna.

It is quite clear from the above extract how this custom is degenerating into nothing but a mere brawl for "ale tasters" and "thirsty souls."

The real origin of this singular ceremony, notwithstanding the researches of Aikin, Barritt, Hibbert Ware, Baines, and others, is still shrouded in obscurity. Many conjectures have been advanced, but, hitherto no opinion has been so far corroborated by evidence of such a substantial nature as to give complete satisfaction. It may be well, therefore, to enumerate some of the most ingenious attempts to unravel this perplexing "historical enigma," and at the same time to give, so far as we are able,

the evidence for and against the different conjectures, leaving the reader free to draw his own inferences, and to form his own conclusions.



*The Black Knight, as Paraded through the Streets of Ashton in 1883*

1st. Douce, in his MS. notes, says :—“ They have a custom at Ashton-under-Lyne on the 16th of April of shooting the Black Lad on horse-back. It is said to have arisen from there having been formerly a black knight who resided in these parts holding the people in vassalage, and using them with great severity.”<sup>(3)</sup> Whether from the habit in former years of associating the “ emblems of the occupation of the first couple married in the year ” with the ceremony or not, we cannot determine, but it has been supposed that one form of tyranny exercised by the feudal lord over his poorer vassals was, what has been so frequently

(3.) Cited by Baines. *Hist. of Lanc.* Vol. II., p. 542, ed., 1836.

designated as the *droit de Seigneur*. Hence says W. E. A. Axon with considerable force, "Some of the traditions are of outrages that seem to be connected with the *droit de Seigneur*. The latest investigator is Dr. Karl Schmidt, of Colmar. The real or supposed existence of the *droit de Seigneur* is known to most lovers of literature. It is the motive of a play by Beaumont and Fletcher, and the foundation of a well known English comedy. There are many allusions to it in Voltaire's polemical writings, and he has also made it the subject of a trifling dramatic work. In the International Exhibition at Milan in 1881, there was an oil painting by Signor A. Ferraguti, which was supposed to represent a victim of this infamous law. And now," he continues, "Dr. Schmidt calmly assures us that this law or custom cited a thousand times to prove the brutality of the middle ages, and the abject slavery of the poor under the feudal system, never had an existence, and that the belief in it is merely 'Ein gelehrter Aberglaube.' The superstition if not killed will certainly be scotched by Dr. Schmidt's vigorous attack. His examination of all the evidence usually relied upon shows that it is quite inadequate to support the vast superstructure which has been reared upon it. Hector Boëthius<sup>(4)</sup> appears to have been the originator of the belief. Boëthius died in 1550, and there is no earlier testimony as to the existence of the *jus primae noctis* in Scotland. That law, which is believed to have extended over a large part of Europe, has left no evidence of its existence in laws, charters, decretals, trials, or glossaries. It is inconceivable that it should have been left undenounced by preachers and unsatirized by the poets. But if this utter silence is conclusive against the existence of such a law or custom, how shall the general belief at a later

(4.) In his account of the Mythical King Evenus, the contemporary of Augustus in Scotland, he says:—"Fecit ad haec plura, relatu indigna, leges tulit improbas omnem olentes spurcitiam: ut licerit singulis suae gentis plures uxores, aliis sex, aliis decem pro opibus ducere. Nobilibus plebeiorum uxores communes essent, ac virginis novae nuptae loci dominus primam libandi pudicitiam potestatem habaret." "It was believed," say Higson, "some half a century ago, that the practice had originated the derisive allusion to an old custom whereby on the marriage of any of his serfs, vassals, and menial dependents, the cruel lord of Assheton not only claimed but frequently used the privilege of sleeping with the bride on the night after the nuptials."



date in its existence be explained? Various causes contributed. There was classical witness to ancient traditions of tyrants who had distinguished themselves by proceedings of a nature which the *jus primae noctis* was supposed to legalise. From various parts of the world came reports of travellers as to tribes among whom defloration was the privilege or duty of kings, priests, or other persons set apart for that purpose. Finally, the existence on part of the feudal lord of a claim to a determining voice in the marriage of his vassals, and to receive payment at the ceremony is undoubted. To this *mercheta mulierum*, the fine paid for permission to marry, a grosser meaning has been attached than the words will warrant."<sup>(5)</sup>

2nd. Aikin tells us the idea is generally prevalent that the Riding of the Black Knight is kept up to perpetuate the disgraceful actions of Sir Ralph Assheton, but "from a sum issued out of court to defray the expense of the effigy, and from a suit of armour which till late it usually rode in, together with other particulars handed down by tradition, a very different account of the origin of the custom is preserved." Aikin then proceeds to state that Thomas de Assheton, who captured the royal standard of Scotland at the battle of Durham, instituted the riding of the black lad to commemorate that event, and that he left the sum of ten shillings yearly to support it, which has within a few years been reduced to five, with his own suit of black velvet and coat of mail, the helmet of which is still remaining.<sup>(6)</sup> It, however, is clear that Aikin has made too much of this incident, for he asserts that Thomas Assheton was knighted for his bravery by Edward III. on his return from France, but there is sufficient evidence to prove that in this he was mistaken, and it is highly probable that he is wrong in stating that Thomas Assheton was the originator of this strange custom. Even presuming that it were so, and that he left, as Aikin supposes, a sum of money to perpetuate the custom, then it is difficult to conceive any reason why the compilers

(5.) *Lanc. Gleanings*. W. E. A. Axon, pp. 198, 199.

(6.) Aikin's *Hist. of Manchester and Forty Miles Round*. Vol. I., p. 224.

of the Rent and Custom Roll should have passed it over without the slightest notice. Again, on the other hand, it is highly probable that had such a demonstration been held prior to 1422 under the patronage of the baronial lord, it would have been noticed in the rent-roll with the sum bequeathed for its perpetuation. Hence we are compelled to admit that we do not see in Aikin's conjecture even a shred of probability; and are forced to conclude, considering the detailed and precise account which we have of all such movements in the rent-roll, that it must have been originated some time subsequent to that date. Others feeling the force of this omission in the custom roll, and at the same time fully conscious that the ceremony was meant in the first instance as an expression of indignation, have searched among Sir John Assheton's successors for a person whose actions could be considered so execrable as to arouse the popular distrust and dislike.

3rd. Another conjecture is to the following effect:—That Sir Thomas Assheton, eldest son of Sir John, was much devoted to the study of alchemy, and that the populace in those superstitious times looked upon him with considerable alarm, supposing him to be possessed of devils, and to work his diabolic art by the aid of the spirits of darkness; and that after his death, the people were so delighted to be free from the fears with which he had haunted them, that they held a demonstration to commemorate the death of the much dreaded and detested Black Knight, who, during his lifetime, had been protected from a violent death at the hands of the mob by the king and his officers; and that this demonstration has been unwittingly perpetuated until the present day.

4th. The fourth opinion is that held by Dr. Hibbert Ware, who has supplied us with a detailed and laboured essay on the subject, full of "ingenious conjectures and cogent inference, yet apparently void of instances of acts sufficiently vicious to justify such long-continued imprecations." Having first caught the true spirit and meaning of the ceremony he began to search for its

cause, and eventually discovered in the rent-roll of Sir John de Assheton the terms "Guld rode" in connection with "Rauf and Robyn of Assheton," and immediately supposed that it was like the ancient custom in Scotland of Guld-riding—"a perambulation of the lords of manors, or by their representatives or officials, to examine the lands of the tenantry in search of weed, *Guld* or *gool*, and to punish by fine the farmers who suffered its growth."

This *Guld-riding* was of great antiquity in Scotland. It is stated that a law was made by King Kenneth<sup>(7)</sup> to prevent the growth of the *manaleta* or *guld*, and to impose a fine of oxen upon the proof of its infraction.<sup>(8)</sup> The Rev. J. P. Bannerman, in a statistical account of the parish of Cargill, in Perthshire, states that with a view of extirpating the weed, "After allowing a reasonable time for procuring clean seed from other grounds, an act of the Baron Court was passed, enforcing an old Act of Parliament to the same effect, imposing a fine of 3s. 4d., or a wether sheep, on the tenants for every stock of *gool* that should be found growing in their corn at a particular day; and certain persons styled *gool-riders* were appointed to ride through the fields, search for *gool*, and carry the law into execution when they discovered it. Though the fine of a wether sheep is now commuted and reduced to a penny, the practice of *gool-riding* is still kept up, and the fine rigidly exacted."<sup>(9)</sup> To this Dr. Hibbert Ware traces the origin of the custom of "Riding the Black Knight," and suggests by way of explanation "that in the days of Sir John Ashton a large portion of low wet land in the vicinity of Ashton was named the Sour Carr.<sup>(10)</sup> It had been overrun with corn-marigolds or carr-gulds, which were so destructive to the corn that the lord of the manor enforced some rigorous measures for their extirpation, similar to the carr-guld riding in Perthshire. Ralph Assheton, son of Sir John by second marriage, and Robin his brother were

(7.) Probably a law of Alexander II. rather than of Kenneth. See *Lanc. Folk Lore*, p. 289.

(8.) Dr. Hibbert Ware's *Illustrations of the Customs of a Manor of the North of England*.

(9.) *Par. Cargill, Perthshire, stat. acc.* 15,536, 537, drawn up by the Rev. J. P. Bannerman.

(10.) *Carr* being synonymous with the Scotch word *carse*, and the well known term *sour*, implying an impoverished state of the carr.—*Lanc. Folk Lore*, p. 290.

on a certain day in spring [Easter Monday] invested with the power of riding over the lands of the carr, named *Carr Guld Rode*, of levying fines of all *carr-gulds* that were found among the corn, and until the penalties were paid, of punishing transgressors by putting them into the *stocks* or *stone rings*, or by incarceration."<sup>(11)</sup>

This conjecture of Hibbert Ware's is both striking and ingenious, but even this, probable as it may seem, is not without its difficulties, which may be enumerated as follows:—1st. If Sir Ralph introduced this Scottish custom into the parish we have to account for the way he obtained his knowledge of this practice. In answer to this it has been suggested that "Sir Ralph being possessed of considerable military genius, went in 1482 with Richard, Duke of Gloucester, to Scotland, where they invested Berwick with 20,000 men, which soon surrendered." It was during his stay in Scotland, it is supposed, that he became acquainted with the custom of guld-riding, a regulation of the despotic barons to prevent their land from being overrun; and that "on his return he prevailed upon his brother [?] to institute a similar inspection in the parish of Ashton, and obtained the enviable position of first guld rider." But there can be little doubt that this extraordinary conclusion, which is wanting in authority, was suggested merely to meet an apparent obstacle to Dr. Hibbert Ware's theory. The second difficulty in connection with Dr. Hibbert Ware's contention consists in the probable misinterpretation of those terms in the rent-roll upon which he builds his argument. For instance, he infers that the *Stane Rynges* mean stocks, while the designation may with equal force be applied to a field enclosed by a ring *fence of stone*, and again if the *rynges*, as is suspected, be a clerical error for *rydges*, then it might be rendered the "*stony ridged field*." Once more the prefix "*guld*" has been taken to signify *carr-guld*, or corn-marigold, and "*rode*" as the past tense for *ride*. But the "*guld rode*" may mean the "*guld-ruyding, or ridding*."

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(11.) "Customs in a Manor of the North of England," by Dr. Hibbert Ware,

And lastly, supposing this account to be the true one, then as Mr. Baines observes, it is difficult to believe that "the offence of Sir Ralph in obliging the farmers to keep their ground free from weeds, was of so heinous a nature as to require to be expiated by centuries of execrations, and the *solemnity* might now be permitted to cease without any detriment to the moral feeling of the place."<sup>(12)</sup>

5th. The last explanation of the origin of this custom is that held perhaps by the majority of writers on the subject, namely, that Sir Ralph, son of Sir John de Assheton, was devoutly attached to the Royal family, with whom he was a great favourite. He was page to Henry VI. in 1439, Sheriff of York in the reign of Edward IV., Lieutenant and Marshal of the Tower under Richard III. In 1439 he married the heiress of Richard Barton, Esq., and thereby became possessor of the manor of Middleton. His power became so great and his jurisdiction so far reaching, that a grant was made to him to the effect that "if, in cases of emergency, suitable persons could not be procured for the trial of delinquents, his own authority should be a sufficient warrant for the purpose."<sup>(13)</sup> Hence, from the nature of his office, says Roby, and the powers that were entrusted to him by the king, and probably, too, from the natural bent of his disposition, arose the popular dislike which vented itself in the well known custom to which we have alluded.<sup>(14)</sup>

"In a metrical tale of tradition," says Butterworth, "published in Harrop's Manchester Volunteer, the Black Knight is represented to have imprisoned a member of the family of Staley, and a daughter of Staley, in the dungeons of Ashton."<sup>(15)</sup> In the present day we have transmitted to us a prayer, which seems from the phraseology in which it is clothed, to be an ejaculation for deliverance from the power he had received from the king, and exercised with so much severity, incarcerating and torturing even

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(12.) *Hist. of Lanc.* Vol. ii., p. 543, ed. 1836.

(13.) This commission is still to be seen in Rymer's *Fœdera*.

(14.) *Traditions of Lanc.* Roby. Vol. iii., p. 201, ed. 1841.

(15.) *Hist. of Ashton.* p. 47, ed. 1842.

the most inoffensive to satisfy his despotic disposition and that of his royal master—

Sweet Jesu, for thy mercy's sake,  
And for thy bitter passion;  
Save us from the axe of the *Tower*,  
And from Sir Ralphe of Ashton.

There is another version of the last two lines, as follows:—

Oh! save me from a burning stake,  
And from Sir Ralph de Assheton.

Bell's Gazetteer states that "Sir Ralph Assheton was shot as he was riding down the principal street of the town, on one of his Easter Monday visitations, and that the inhabitants took no trouble to discover the assassin." Hence it is supposed that after his death Easter Monday was selected for the celebration of the ceremony.



*The Black Knight, as he appeared in the Olden Time.*

Roby, with a vivid imagination and an original power which few excel, has in one of his characteristic stories, given us a very good illustration of the offensive custom of heriotship and

the Yule Feast, combined with an imaginary description of the tyranny of the "Black Knight of Ashton," whom he supposes to have been no other than Sir Ralph Assheton. A portion of this sketch we subjoin, as it carries us back in thought, and sets the events of those times in a most striking manner before the mind :—

. . . . .

In those days, when the gentry went little from home, set times of mirth and recreation were constantly observed in their spacious and hospitable mansions. Yule, or Christmas, was a feast of especial note and observance. The great hall was mostly the scene of these boisterous festivities, where, from the gallery, the lord of the mansion and his family might witness the sports, without being incommoded by the uncouth and rustic manners of their guests. It was the custom to invite all who were in any way dependent on the proprietor, and who owed him suit and service.

. . . . .

The Christmas but one following the elevation of Richard to the throne, in 1483, was a season of unusual severity. Many tenants of Sir Ralph were prevented from assembling at the Yule feast. A storm had rendered the roads almost impassable, keeping most of the aged and infirm from sharing in this glorious pastime. The Yule log was larger than ever, and the blaze kept continually on the roar. No ordinary scale of consumption could withstand the attacks of the enemy, and thaw the icicles from his beard.

The wassail-bowl had gone freely about, and the company, Hobbe Adamson, Hobbe of the Leghes, William the Arrowsmith, Jack the Woodman, Jack the Hind, John the Slater, Roger the Baxter, with many others, together with divers widows, of those who owed service to their lord, clad in their holiday costume—black hoods and brown jackets and petticoats—were all intent upon their pastimes, well charged with fun and frolic. Their mirth was, however, generally kept within the bounds of decency and moderation by a personage of great importance, called the Lord of Misrule, who, though not intolerant of a few coarse and practical jokes upon the occasion, was yet, in some measure, bound to preserve order and decorum, on pain of being degraded from his office. To punish the refractory, a pair of stone handstocks were commonly used, having digit-holes for every size, from the paws of the ploughman to the taper fingers of my lady's maiden. This instrument was in the special keeping of the dread marshal of these festivities.

As it drew on towards eventide, the mirth increased. The rude legendary ballads of Sir Lancelot of the Lake, Beavois of Southampton, Robin Hood, the Pindar of Wakefield, and the Friar of Fountain's Abbey, Clim of the Clough, Ranulph of Chester, his Exploits in the Holy Land, together with the wondrous deeds of war and love performed by Sir Roger de Calverly, had been sung and recited to strange and uncouth music. Carols, too, were chanted between whiles in a most unreverend fashion. A huge Christmas pie, made in the shape of a cratch or cradle, was placed on the board.

This being accounted a great test of orthodoxy, every one was obliged to eat a slice, lest he should be suspected of favouring the heretical tenets then spreading widely throughout the land. Blindman's-buff and hot-cockles had each their turn; but the sport that seemed to afford the most merriment, was a pendulous stick, having an apple at one end, and on the other a lighted candle, so that the unfortunate and liquorish wight, who bit at this tempting bait, generally burnt his nose on the rebound, as the stick bounced to and fro on its pivot.

The hall was now cleared for the masks. In this play, the Black Knight himself generally joined, laughing heartily at and hurrying on the mishaps of the revellers. Many horrible and grotesque-looking shapes and disguises soon made their appearance; but one, more especially than the rest, excited no slight degree of distress and alarm. His antics proved a continual source of annoyance to the rest of the company. He singed Will the Arrowsmith's beard, poured a whole flagon of hot liquor in the wide hosen of Hobbe Adamson; but the enacter of St. George in a more especial manner attracted his notice; he crept between his legs, and bore him right into the middle of the pigsty, before he could be stayed; from whence the heroic champion of England issued, sorely shent with the admixtures and impurities of the place.

This termagant was a little, broad-set figure, wearing a mask intended as a representation of his Satanic majesty, adorned with a huge pair of horns. From it hung a black cloak or shirt, out of which protruded a goodly and substantial tail. No one could discover the name of this ruthless disturber of their sports. Every attempt was unavailing; he shot through their fingers as though they had been greased, and a loud and contumelious laugh was the only reward of their exertions. In the end, a shrewd conjecture went abroad that he was none other than some malicious imp of darkness, let loose upon their frolics to disquiet and perplex their commemoration of the Blessed Nativity. Yet was it an unusual occurrence upon Yule night, when these disturbers were supposed to be prevented from walking the earth, being confined for a space to their own kingdom. But the desperate character of their lord, who was thought to fear neither man nor devil, might in some sort account for this unwelcome intrusion.

The guests grew cautious. Whispers and unquiet looks went round, while the little devil would ever and anon frisk about, to the great detriment and dismay of his companions. The lord's presence was anxiously looked for. The ruddy glow of their mirth had become dim. Sir Ralph, they hoped, would either unmask this mischievous intruder, or eject him from the premises; he having the credit of being able to master aught in the shape of either mortal or immortal intelligence.

At length he came clad in his usual suit of black velvet. A swarthy and ill-favoured wight he was, with a beard, as the story goes, that would have swept off the prickly gorse-bush in its progress. He was received with a great show of humility, and all made their best obeisance. But this deputy, representative, or vicerent of "Old Hornie," he stood erect, among the obsequious guests, in a posture not all either respectful or becoming.

"Now, knaves, to your sport. Ye be as doleful as a pack of pedlars with a full basket after the fair. I'll make ye play, and be merry too: or, 'e



lady, ye shall taste of the mittens. Dan, give these grim-faced varlets a twinge of the gloves there, just to make 'em laugh."

His tyrannous and overbearing temper would even make them merry by compulsion. But the terrified hearers did not manifest that intense feeling of gratification which this threat was intended to produce. Each looked on the face of his neighbour, hoping to find there some indication of the felicity which his own had failed to exhibit.

The countenance of their chief grew more dark and portentous. Just as they were expecting the full burst of his fury, up trotted the merry imp, and irreverently crept behind Sir Ralph. Before their almost incredulous eyes did he lay hold on the tail of the knight's cloak, and twisting it round his arm, by a sudden jerk he brought this dignified personage backwards upon the floor. The oaken beams trembled at this unlooked-for invasion of their repose. Deep, deadly, and abominable curses rang through the hall. Livid and ghastly by turns, the knight's features wore that ludicrous expression of rage and astonishment more easy to conceive than to portray. Volleys of oaths and inarticulate sounds burst forth, his wrath almost too big for utterance. When reinstated in that posture which is the distinctive characteristic of man, he did not attempt to administer his vindictive retribution by proxy. Laying hold on a tough cudgel, he gave it one ominous swing, describing an arc of sufficient magnitude to have laid an army prostrate. He then pursued the luckless emissary of the Evil One, roaring and foaming with his unusual exertion. There was now no lack of activity. A hawk among the chickens, or a fox in a farm-yard, was nothing to it. Sometimes was seen the doughty Sir Ralph driving the whole herd before him, like a flock of sheep; but the original cause of the mischief generally contrived to mingle with the rabble rout, who in vain attempted to rid themselves of his company. The knight was not over nice in the administration of his discipline. Often, when he thought himself near enough for its accomplishment, he aimed a terrific blow, but shot wide of the mark, bringing down the innocent and unoffending victims, who strewed the floor like swaths behind the mower. Whenever a lucky individual could disentangle himself from his comrades, he darted through the door, and, in spite of the storm and pitchy darkness without, thought himself too happy in escaping with a few holes in his skin. Yet he of the horns and tail, by some chance or another, always passed unhurt; a hideous laugh accompanying the adroit contrivances by which he eluded the cudgel.

The hall was now but scantily supplied with guests; the runaways and wounded having diminished the numbers to some half-score. A parley was sounded by the victorious and pursuing enemy.

"Hold, ye lubberly rascals! Ye scum—ye recrement—why do ye run?" said the knight, puffing with great vigour. "I say, why run ye?" brandishing his club. "Bring hither that limb of Satan, and ye shall depart every one to his home. Lay hold of him, I tell ye, and begone."

But these terms of capitulation were by no means so easy to accept as the proposer imagined, for the first mover of the mischief had gotten himself perched on a projecting ledge by the gallery, whence they were either unable or unwilling to dislodge him.

"How!" said the knight. "Ye are afraid, cowards, I trow. Now will I have at thee for once. I'll spoil thy capering!" This threat was followed by a blow aimed at the devoted representative from the infernal court; but it failed to dismount him, for he merely shrunk aside and continued harmless. Another, and a more contumelious laugh announced this failure. Even the Black Knight grew alarmed. The being was surely invulnerable. He stayed a moment ere he repeated the attack, when, to his unspeakable horror and astonishment, there issued a thin, squeaking voice from underneath the disguise.

"The heriot, Sir Ralph; the heriot! We'll have a heriot at Easter!"

Had a thunderbolt fallen at his feet, the knight could not have been more terrified. He let the weapon fall; his hands dropped powerless at his side; his countenance was like the dark, rolling sea, strangely tossed by some invisible tempest. The cause of this sudden and unexpected termination of the assault we will now proceed briefly to unfold.

The morning of this day, being the eve of the Blessed Nativity, had been employed by the Black Knight in the laudable occupation of visiting a poor widow, who, though recently bereaved of her husband, had not rendered the customary heriot. Unfortunately, the only valuable she possessed was a cow, the produce of which formed the chief support of the family; four young children, and a boy of about fourteen, whose brains were generally supposed more or less oddly constructed than those of his neighbours, depended on this supply for their daily support. Cold, bitter cold was the season, and it had set in with more than common severity. Day after day the payment was delayed. Every morning the widow and her son fondled the poor beast, as though it were the last; but another morning and evening succeeded. Supper could not supply the place of breakfast, nor breakfast contend against the wants of supper; and how could the already half-famished ones be sustained when their only resource should be taken away?

"Go down upon your knees, Will, and thank God for another morning's meal. It is the eve of our blessed Lord's incarnation, and I think He will not leave us to perish in this world who has made such bountiful provision for our well-being in the next. The knight has not sent for the heriot, and I think that He alone who succours the widow and the fatherless can have inclined his heart to mercy."

Scarcely were the thanksgivings finished, when they were alarmed by the rapid approach of their persecutor. The door flew open, and in thundering accents the Black Knight himself came to make his demand.

"I'll have thee to the dungeon, hag, for lack of service. How comes it the heriot is not paid?"

The widow made no reply; her heart was full.

"See to it," continued the pitiless churl; "for if thy quittance be not forthcoming; and that in haste, I'll turn thee and thy brats into the moor-dikes, where ye may live upon turf and ditch-water, if it so please ye."

"Oh, ha' pity!" But the widow's prayer was vain. The Black Knight was never known to hearken either to pity or persuasion.

"Thy cow—thy cow! This night let it be rendered." Sir Ralph Asshe-ton never uttered a threat that fell unexecuted.

C—IV.

"Mother," said the boy, "is this Sir Ralph, our liege Lord?"

"Ay, fool," angrily replied the knight. "And what may thy wits gather by the asking?"

"And will *he* ever die, mother?"

"Hush, Willy," said the terrified woman.

"Nay," returned the leering half-wit; "I was but a thinking that if he does, may be *his* master, too, will want a heriot."

"And what may be the name of *my* master?" said Sir Ralph, with a furious oath.

"The devil," replied the boy, with apparent unconcern.

"Ay; and what will they give him, dost think?"

"*Thos!*"

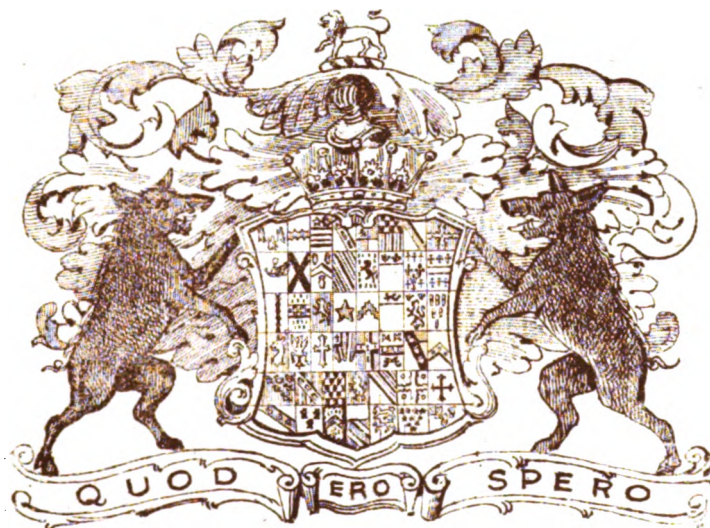
Whether the peculiar expression of the lad's face, or the fearless indifference of his address, so unusual to that of the crouching slaves he generally met with, contributed to the result, we know not; but, instead of correcting the boy for his audacity, he hastily departed, finally repeating his threat of punishment in case of disobedience.

When Sir Ralph got home, his ill-humour vented itself with more severity than usual. On joining the sports, he was at the first somewhat startled on perceiving a representation of the personage which the morning's conversation had by no means prepared him to recognise either with admiration or respect. Still, as it was nothing out of the common usage, he took no apparent notice, further than by remarking the general gloom that prevailed, contrary to the usual course of these festivities. Then came the unlooked-for aggression upon his person, provoking his already irritated feelings into vehement action. But when the last unfortunate blow had failed in its purpose, appearing to the furious knight to have been warded off by a charm, a sudden misgiving came across him, which, with the speech of this supposed imp of darkness, alluding to his adventure with the boy, wrought so powerfully upon his now excited imagination, so that he stood aghast, unable to grapple with its terrors. He hastily departed from the hall, leaving the enemy in undisputed possession of the field.

What occurred subsequently we are not told, save that on the following morning the widow's heriot was sent back with an ungracious message from the knight, shewing his unwillingness to restore what terror had only wrung from him.

. . . . .





*Booths' Quarterings. — Taken from an Old Painting, lent by Henry Hall, Esq.*

## The Lineal connection between the Earls of Stamford and Warrington, and the Asshetons.

### CHAPTER IX.

THE BOOTHS.—Sir William Booth—George Booth—George Booth—William Booth—His will—George Booth—George Booth—One of a deputation to Charles II.—Elevated to the Peerage, Baron Delamere—Henry Booth—His trials for treason—Devoted to Prince William—Member of Privy Council—Chancellor of Exchequer—Created Earl of Warrington—George Booth—Earldom becomes extinct—His Daughter Mary marries 4th Earl of Stamford—George Harry Booth Grey, 5th Earl of Stamford, &c.—George Harry Grey, 6th Earl of Stamford, &c.—George Harry Grey, 7th Earl of Stamford, &c.—Rev. Harry Grey, heir.

SIR WILLIAM BOOTH, of Dunham Massey, Knt., who married Margaret, eldest daughter and co-heiress of Sir Thomas Assheton—by Elizabeth, daughter and sole heiress of Ralph Staley, Esq.—was the lineal descendant of John de Booth,

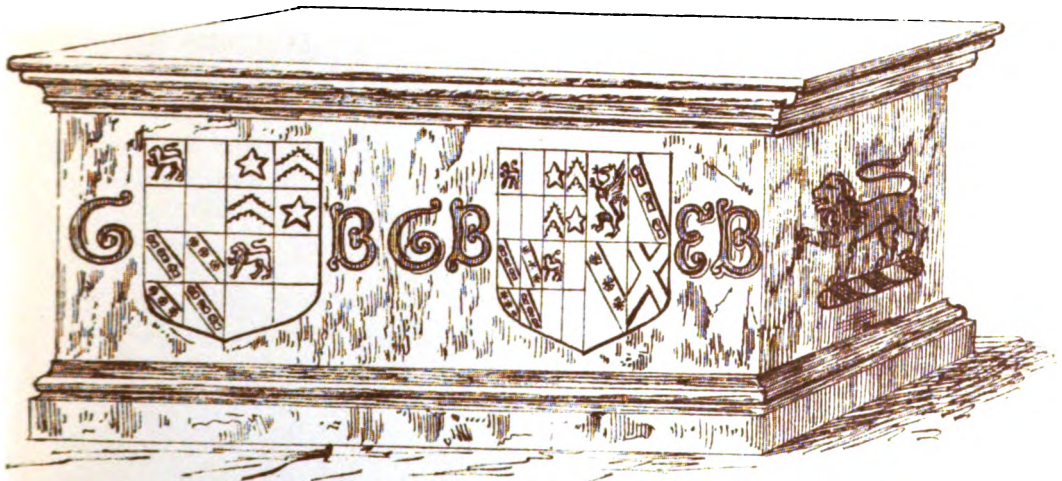
of Barton, near Manchester, the progenitor of one of the most influential families in Cheshire, namely, the Booths of Dunham. He was the son of George Booth, Esq., and at the time of his father's death in 1484 was ten years of age. He died November 11th, 1519, when an *Inquisition post mortem* was taken, containing the following items:—"That before the said Sir William Bothe, Knt., died, a certain Laurence Merbury and William Bauden, at the Court at Chester, at Michaelmas 1512, suffered a recovery against the said William Bothe, &c., by writ of 'entry in le post' of the manor house of Bolyn, &c., to the following uses:—That Ellen, the wife [his second wife] of the said Sir William Bothe, Knt., now living, shall after his death peacefully occupy the manor house of Bolyn, &c., for the whole of her life, for and in the name of her dowry, and after her death to the use of *George Bothe*, son and heir of the said William. And they (jurors) further say that the manor of Bolyn, &c., are held of the King as Earl of Chester, as Lord of the Hundred of Macclesfield, by Knight's service, &c. And that the said Sir William Bothe died the Wednesday before the feast of St. Martin the Bishop last past, and that *George Bothe* his son and next heir, is of the age of 29 years."<sup>(1)</sup>

GEORGE BOOTH, Esq., married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Thomas Butler, of Bewsey, near Warrington, Knt., by whom he had a large family. He died October 25th, 1531. We subjoin several particulars from the *Inq. p. m.*, which is of considerable length. "The said George Bothe is now dead, but the said Elizabeth is alive and in good health, and is at Dunham Mascye, &c. Certain lands in Stayley were conceded to John Bothe, younger son of the said George Bothe, for the term of his life, who is now alive at Dunham Mascye, and other lands in the *same place* to Robert Bothe, another son, for his life, who is now alive at Dunham Mascye, &c. The said George Bothe died the 25th October last past 1531, and *George Bothe, Esq.*, is his son and

(1.) Cheshire Inquisitions post mortem.—Record Office. Cited in full in *East Cheshire*, by Earwaker, vol. i., pp. 55, 56.

next heir, and is aged 15 years the Sunday next before the feast of St. Thomas the Apostle [Dec. 21] last past [1530].”(2)

GEORGE BOOTH, Esq., son and heir of George above, was under age at the time of his father's death. In proving his age, some five years later, “Robert Heypee, chaplain, and then curate of the Church of Ashton-under-Lyne,” stated that he baptized “the said George in the said church the Monday after the Sunday next before the feast of St. Thomas the Apostle [Dec. 21st, 1515];” and by a writ dated December 2nd, 1541, he had “full livery of all his estates granted him.” He married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Edmund Trafford, by whom he had a son William and three daughters. In his *Inquisition post mortem*, we find the following particulars:—“George Bothe, Esq., was seised *inter alia* of the manor house of Bolyn, &c. And the said George Bothe died August 3rd, 1543, and William Bothe is his son and next heir, and was aged three years on August 4th last past.”



*Tomb of George Booth, Esq., 1543.*

(2.) The will of George Booth is dated October 6th, 1531, and is preserved at Chester, and has been printed by the Chetham Society. See *Lanc. and Ches. Wills*, vol. i., p. 93.

WILLIAM BOOTH, being only three years old at the time of his father's death, became a ward of the King's. He was High Sheriff of Cheshire in 1571, and in 1578 was knighted by Queen Elizabeth. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Warburton, of Arley, Knt., by whom he had a large family. His *Inq. p. m.* states that :—" Sir William Bothe, Knt., was seised *inter alia* of lands in Wylmeslow, Dean Rowe, Styall, Pownall, Falibrome, and *Stayley*, &c.. together with the reversion of the manor house of Bolyn, &c. He died the 28th November last past, and George Bothe, is his son and heir, aged 13 years on the 20th October last past." His will, which is not only of considerable local interest, but also a quaint specimen of wills in those days, contains the following curious items :—

" He bequeaths to his wife ' the chain of gold ' which he brought with him from London, ' weighing about xxx<sup>li</sup> (? £30); another small chain, a carcanet of gold, one pair of bracelets of gold, two suits of borders of gold, one single border of gold, one tablet of gold, with all the *rings she was accustomed to wear*, and certain small buttons of gold enamelled black and white, three little gilt bowls, with his third salt-cellar, *and all the husbandry stuff at Stayley Hall*. To his son George [his heir] he leaves all the rest of his plate, his best chain of gold with his signet, and all his apparel, with all his gold buttons, except those before given to his wife. ' To William Duncalfe my cast of ffawcons, my baie trottinge nagge and settinge spaniell.' ' To his well-beloved mother ' [Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Edmund Trafford, Knt.] ' my sealing ringe usually worne upon my little finger,' to his brother-[in-law] Davenport, ' all his hounds,' and to his cousin William Tatton, Mr. George Brereton [of Ashley], and Edmund Joddrell, ' *all his fighting cocks and hens*;' to his sisters Davenport, Chantrell, and Done, ' each a gold ring,' and to his brother-in-law Mr. John Done his ' best baie nagge and pied horse, *then at Stayley Hall*;' to his daughter-in-law Jane Bothe [then married to George], a ' black ambling nag that was Mr. Carrington's, and also a gold broach.' To his brother in-law Mr. Peter Warburton, ' his best grey nag that he himself was accustomed to ride upon, and also his lute;' to his brother-in-law Mr. George Warburton, a ' young coal black nag;' to Mr. Vicar, of Rochdale, ' *iiij<sup>li</sup> (£4)*;' to William Leigh, ' his long black cloak;' to George Holme, ' his best pair of virginals, and numerous small legacies' in money, &c. Proved at Chester, the 10th December, 1579."<sup>(3)</sup>

(3.) *Lanc. and Ches. Wills*. Chet. Soc., part ii., pp. 65, 67. See also Stanley Papers. *Chet. Soc.*, vol. ii., pp. 192-3.

His wife, who survived her husband for many years, by an indenture made the 4th January, 17 James I., between Dame Elizabeth Booth, then residing at Bath, on the one part, and the Mayor and Citizens of Chester, on the other part, grants upon trust, amongst several other sums of money, *the sum of 50s. to the Overseers of Ashton-under-Lyne Parish, to be expended in weekly instalments, in purchasing loaves of bread to be distributed to the aged poor, immediately after morning prayers.*

GEORGE BOOTH succeeded his father, and being under age, was a ward of Queen Elizabeth's. He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth about 1595. He became High Sheriff of Cheshire in 1597, and was created a baronet by James I. May 22nd, 1611. In 1622 he again served as High Sheriff of Cheshire, and in the following year, 1623, held the office of High Sheriff of Lancashire. He was married twice. His first wife was Jane, daughter and heiress of John Carrington, of Carrington, near Bowdon, Esq., to whom he was married on February 18th, 1577-8, being not more than 11 years old, and his wife being at the time 15 years of age. She died without issue, and he married next Katherine, daughter of Sir Edmund Anderson, Knt., Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, by whom he had a large family. His eldest son William predeceased his father. During the Civil War, Sir George espoused the Parliamentary side. He died at Dunham Massey, October 24th, 1652. His estates and honours descended to his grandson, George, son of William, deceased.

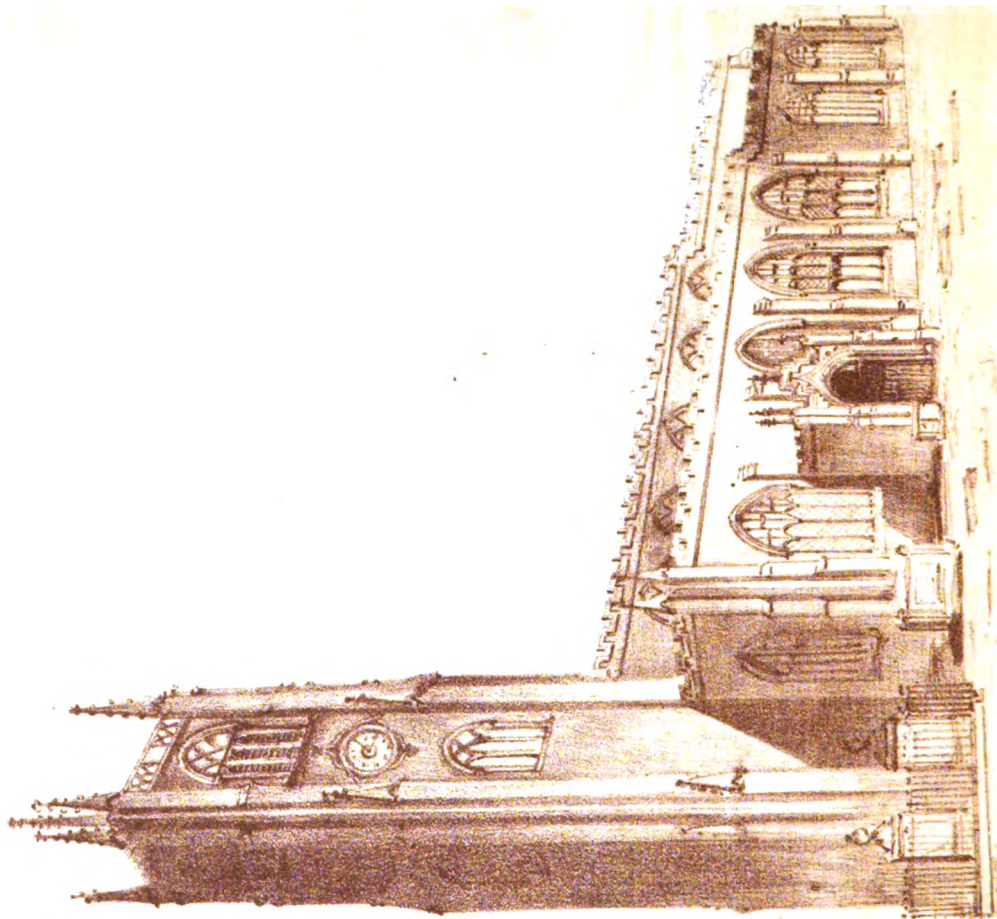
GEORGE BOOTH, was the second son and heir of William Booth, Esq. He represented Cheshire in Parliament in 1641 and 1651. He played a conspicuous part on the side of the Parliament, and becoming dissatisfied with the Commonwealth, headed the "Cheshire Insurrection" of 1659, which was the precursor of the restoration of Charles II. in the following year. After the death of Oliver Cromwell, he formed one of a deputation for inviting Charles II. to ascend the throne of England; and after the restoration he was elevated to the peerage, April 20th, 1661,



with the title of Baron Delamere, of Dunham Massey. "Not being studious," says Butterworth, "to please the court, he was subsequently disregarded by the King, and ill used by his successor James II." He died August 8th, 1684. He married twice. First, Katherine, the daughter of the Earl of Lincoln, who died childless; and *second Elizabeth, daughter of Henry Grey, Earl of Stamford*, by whom he had several children.

HENRY BOOTH, the second son and heir of Sir George Booth, became second Lord Delamere, and like his father, was much engaged in politics during the reigns of Charles II. and James II. "He was returned a member of Parliament for Cheshire." On the death of his father he took his seat in the House of Lords, but, says Butterworth, "scarcely had he taken his seat as a peer before he was consigned to the Tower, and placed at the bar and accused of high treason. He had, with great zeal, acted for the interest of his country, and had been particularly anxious for the passing of the famous bill of exclusion, for which the great and good Lord Russell complimented him on the morning of his execution. For this he incurred the displeasure of the then Duke of York. After some month's confinement he was released; but on the accession of James II. he was again committed; and, on being admitted to bail, was committed a third time on a false accusation of high treason, January 14th, 1685. He was shortly afterwards tried in Westminster Hall, before the Lord Chancellor, Jeffreys, his particular enemy, who was constituted Lord High Steward on the occasion. The jury consisted of twenty-seven peers, of a select class, summoned by Jeffreys. The impeachment accused his lordship of 'conspiring with Charles Gerard, Esq., and other traitors, to dethrone his majesty, James II., with assembling to make war in the county of Chester, and with a design to seize the city of Chester, and the castle of the said city.' In support of this charge, a wretch of the name of Saxon was called, who had clearly been suborned to tender false testimony; and who deposed that Lord Delamere had sent for him to his lordship's house, at Mere,

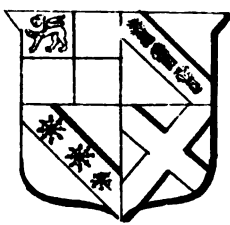
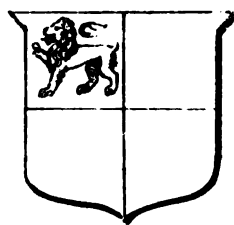




**ST. MICHAEL'S.**  
*Parish Church, Ashton-under-Lyne.*





*Dunham.**Birth and Quarterings,-  
- Showing Massey Coat.**Massey of Dunham.*

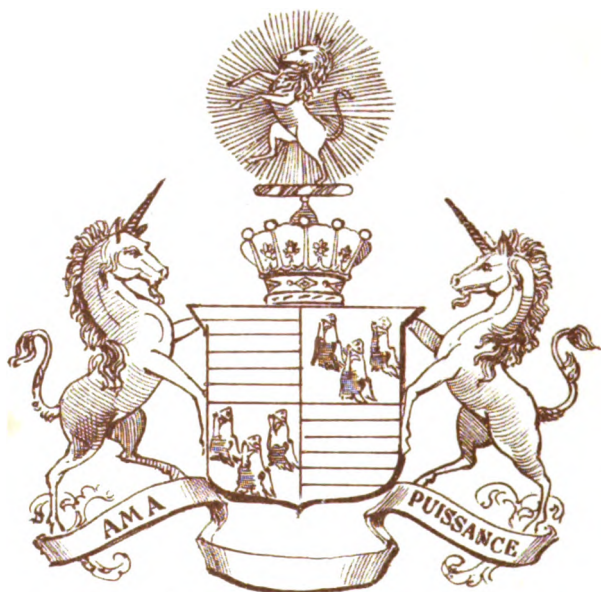
and had despatched him with a message to the Duke of Monmouth, to inform his grace that ten thousand men would be raised in Cheshire; but that the rising must be delayed from the first of June till Midsummer. His lordship made so full and able a defence, that he was pronounced not guilty, by the unanimous vote of the jury. Happy was it for him that he had been tried by his peers, and not such hireling juries as Lord Russell and others had suffered by. Subsequently he lived a retired life at Dunham Massey, till four years afterwards, on the arrival of the Prince of Orange in England, he raised a large force in Cheshire and Lancashire, to aid in effecting the revolution, and then marched to meet the prince at Windsor. On the 17th of December, 1688, he, together with the Marquis of Halifax and the Earl of Shrewsbury, were charged by Prince William with a message to King James, commanding him to leave his palace and to renounce his throne. Here is a striking instance of the mutability of fortune. King James, to the honour of Lord Delamere, said, when in retirement in France, that none of the messengers behaved with so much respect as Lord Delamere."<sup>(4)</sup> On the 13th of February, 1688, Lord Delamere was appointed a member of the Privy Council, and on the 9th of April, 1689, Chancellor of the Exchequer; by letters patent, dated 17th April, 1690, he was created *Earl of Warrington* by King William III.,<sup>(5)</sup>

(4.) *Hist. of Ashton.* Butterworth, pp. 24, 25, Ed. 1842.(5.) *East Cheshire.* Earwaker, vol. i., p. 60.

but shortly after died in London, January 2nd, 1693-4, at the early age of 42 ; and was succeeded by his second son and heir.

GEORGE BOOTH, 2nd *Earl of Warrington* and 3rd Baron Delamere, died August 2nd, 1758, aged 83, leaving by his first wife Mary, [daughter and co-heiress of John Oldbury, of London, Esq., merchant], an only daughter, also called Mary. There being no male issue the earldom became extinct, and the title of Baron Delamere passed to his cousin, Nathaniel Booth, Esq.

MARY BOOTH, only child of George Booth above, married in 1736, *Harry Grey*, 4th Earl of Stamford, who in 1758 succeeded his father-in law in his Lancashire and Cheshire estates, among which were the Manors of Ashton-under-Lyne, Stayley, &c.



#### THE EARLS OF STAMFORD AND WARRINGTON.

The ancient family of Grey has a very singular history. "It is not generally known that from Elizabeth Widville or Wood-

ville, Queen Consort of King Edward IV. is descended Queen Victoria, and from the same lady by her first husband Sir John de Grey, is descended the Earls of Stamford." The unfortunate "ten days Queen," Lady Jane Grey, was also a descendant of Elizabeth Woodville. Always prominent in the history of England the name of Grey has furnished courtiers, statesmen, and warriors. "The honours of the family were great, but were eclipsed when Lady Jane Grey, her husband, Lord Guildford Dudley, and her father, the Duke of Suffolk, were beheaded early in the reign of Queen Mary the First." When James the First came to the throne he created Sir Henry Grey, Knight. This Henry Grey was the only nephew of the attainted Duke, Lord Grey, of Groby, county Leicester. This nobleman was succeeded by his grandson Henry, who was created Earl of Stamford on the 26th of March, 1628. His mother belonged to the once great and powerful Neville family, being the daughter of Lord Abergavenny. From this marriage was descended Harry, Fourth Earl, who married Mary Booth, only daughter and sole heiress of George Booth, and Mary daughter of John Oldbury, of London, Esq., the last Earl of Warrington, and third Baron of Delamere. The barony passed to the Earl's cousin, and expired in 1770. He was succeeded by his son, George Harry Booth Grey.

GEORGE HARRY BOOTH GREY, 5th Earl of Stamford, was created Baron Delamere and Earl of Warrington on April 22nd, 1796, thus becoming the Earl of Stamford and Warrington. He married Henrietta Cavendish Bentinck, second daughter of William, Duke of Portland. He died May 23rd, 1819, and his titles and estates were inherited by his eldest son, George Harry.

GEORGE HARRY GREY, 6th Earl of Stamford, was also fourth Earl of Warrington, Baron Delamere, of Dunham Massey; Baron Grey, of Groby; Baron Bonville and Harrington; Lord Lieutenant and *Custos Rotulorum* of the county of Chester. He married Henrietta Charlotte Elizabeth Charteris, daughter of the Right Hon. Francis Lord Elcho, son of Francis, fifth Earl of Wemyss. She died in 1838. This earl, says Butterworth, "evinced much



solicitude for the prosperity and welfare of the inhabitants of Ashton-under-Lyne. For the purpose of maintaining the due value of property in Ashton, as compared with the increased worth of land in the adjacent districts, he procured an Act of Parliament in 1838-9, effecting a considerable change in the tenures by which lands are held from the manor. In order to create a general feeling of kind regard and good will, the earl occasionally resided at the Old Hall, the ancient mansion of the Asshetons, which was fitted-up for the temporary residence of his lordship, in August, 1838. On the 22nd of August, 1838, this nobleman visited the town, to superintend the arrangements for his abode at the manor house, and to view the parish church. This event was commemorated by the presentation of a congratulatory address to the earl, and a public dinner by a number of the principal inhabitants." He died 1845, and was succeeded by his grandson George Harry.

GEORGE HARRY GREY succeeded his grandfather on the 26th of April, 1845. He was 7th Earl of Stamford, Earl of Warrington, Baron Grey, and Baron Delamere. He was born on the 17th of January, 1827. He was sent to Eton, and on his return from that distinguished institution was placed under the care of Dr. Augustus Short, a clergyman, who was one of the Bampton lecturers, and afterwards obtained the honour of being the joint Bishop of Adelaide. Dr Short was a distinguished Oxford man, but his pupil passed to the sister university, and received the degree of M.A. in 1848. He was notable for the interest he took in athletic and sporting matters. "He was known to be one of the best of the gentlemen cricket players during his early days. His accession to the peerage whilst still a minor had of course a marked influence upon his after career. It debarred him from that apprenticeship to public affairs which many heirs to peerages have had the good fortune to experience." On the 23rd of December, 1848, he married his first wife, Elizabeth, daughter of John Billinge, Esq., of Wincanton. This lady died on the 22nd of October, 1854. His lordship married his second wife on the

9th of August, 1855, namely, Katherine, daughter of the late Henry Cocks, Esq. He died on the 2nd of January, 1883. He left no issue, consequently the Earldom of Warrington and the Barony of Delamere, of Dunham Massey, expires; but the Earldom of Stamford and Barony of Grey of Groby appear to pass to his lordship's cousin, the Rev. Harry Grey, grandson of the Hon. John Grey, who was the third son of the fourth earl. Only the male descendants of the fifth earl could succeed to the earldom of Warrington and the barony of Delamere, and apparently there are none.

Lord Stamford was personally little known in this district. Occasionally he paid a visit to the Old Hall, but these visits were few and far between, and in recent years had almost ceased. He will be remembered principally for his gifts of land and money for various beneficent objects promoted in the locality. His greatest benefaction was that of the land for the Park which bears his name, and which he opened on the 12th day of July, 1873. The land given for the Park comprised a total of 35 acres. More recently the late earl has made over to the trustees a further plot of land, including "Chadwick's Dams." Amongst other gifts of land for the benefit and improvement of the district, may be mentioned the site of the Infirmary, in extent about five acres. The inhabitants of Ashton are also indebted to the late earl for the gift of those plots of land on which are erected the Baths and the Mechanics' Institution, the former being 1,800 yards, and the latter 812 yards. The sites of several churches were also given by him. During the cotton famine he contributed the sum of £1,000 to the fund for the relief of the distressed families in the manors of Ashton-under-Lyne and Stalybridge.

When the late Earl and Countess commemorated their silver wedding, the tenants on the Ashton estates presented them with a valuable piece of plate, enclosed in a box made from an old oak found at the Old Hall. On the plate was this inscription:--  
"Presented to the Earl and Countess of Warrington on their silver wedding day, by the tenantry of the manors of Ashton-

under-Lyne, Stayley, and Micklehurst, with their sincere congratulations and best wishes, 29th August, 1880."

Lord Stamford was emphatically a sportsman. "It was not destined," says the *Daily Telegraph*, "that the seventh Earl of Stamford should be born with tastes and aptitudes of a nature to make him desirous of emulating the scholarly fame and studious habits of his illustrious ancestress, Lady Jane Grey. The race from which he sprang traces its descent in unbroken lineage from Sir Henry de Grey, upon whom, together with the manor of Turroe, in Essex, King Richard I. conferred the privilege of hunting the hare and fox in any lands belonging to the Crown except the King's own forests. From time immemorial it was a race given to outdoor pursuits." In referring to sporting tendencies of the late earl, the *Standard* remarks:—"The Jockey Club loses a notable member, the turf a lavish patron, and three counties a territorial magnate by his death. It would be hard to say in what department of sport Lord Stamford did not excel. He was not without fame as a deer stalker; and he was, once upon a time, regarded as a marvellously good shot. At battue shooting, a no less questionable form of sport, perhaps, than pigeon shooting, he is believed to have rivalled, if not beaten the notorious feat performed by Maharajah Dhuleep Shing, who is credited or discredited, with having killed 780 partidges in one day. To the general public he was best known for his horse-racing, and in his capacity of a patron of the turf."

According to the *Leicester Daily Post*, the father of the late earl was an influential Liberal, and was called to the House of Lords by Earl Grey in 1832 as Baron Grey of Groby. The late noble earl, who succeeded his grandfather, was a Conservative. However, though he long held a seat in the Upper House, he may be said to have taken little part in public affairs. It is stated by Mr. Howard Evans, "That thrice, at least, has this house played an important part in our history, and, owing in great part to fortunate marriages, its estates are both large and valuable.

The Earl of Stamford and Warrington owns in Cheshire, 8,612 acres; Lancashire, 5,231; Leicestershire, 9,012; Stafford, 7,339; Salop, 606; York and Worcestershire, 161; total, 30,961."

Rev. HARRY GREY, the present peer, was born in 1812, and was educated at Sherbourne School, and at St. Edmund Hall, Oxford, where he graduated B.A. He married first in 1844, Susan, now deceased, the daughter of Mr. Gaydon; secondly, in 1873, Anne, daughter of Mr. Macnamara, who died in 1874; and was married a third time in 1881. The new earl was formerly in holy orders in the Church of England, but was latterly described as of Wynberg, Cape of Good Hope.



## Table Illustrative of Chapter IX.

<b>MARGARET ASSHETON.</b>	<b>M. SIR WILLIAM BOOTH,</b> of Dunham Massey, Knt. Died 1519.
<b>GEORGE BOOTH,</b> died Oct. 25th, 1531.	<b>M. ELIZABETH,</b> daughter of Sir Thomas Butler, of Bewsey, near Warrington, Co. Lanc., Knt.
<b>GEORGE BOOTH,</b> died Aug. 3rd, 1543.	<b>M. ELIZABETH,</b> daughter of Sir Edmund Trafford, Co. Lanc., Knt
<b>WILLIAM BOOTH,</b> died Nov. 28th, 1579.	<b>M. ELIZABETH,</b> daughter of Sir John Warburton, of Arley, Knt.
<b>GEORGE BOOTH,</b> created Baronet, May 22, 1611. In 1622, High Sheriff of Cheshire. 1623, High Sheriff of Lanc. Died Oct. 24, 1652.	<b>M. 2nd, KATHERINE,</b> daughter of Sir Edmond Anderson, Knt
<b>[WILLIAM BOOTH],</b> pre-deceased his father.	<b>M. 1st, JANE,</b> Daughter of John Carrington, of Carrington.
<b>GEORGE BOOTH, Bart.,</b> son and heir of William Booth. Great Parliamentarian. Headed the "Cheshire Insurrection," 1659. Created Baron Delamere, April 20, 1661. Died Aug. 8th, 1684.	<b>M. 2nd, ELIZABETH,</b> daughter of Henry Grey, Earl of Stamford
<b>[WILLIAM BOOTH.]</b>	<b>1st, KATHERINE,</b> daughter of Theophilus Fiennes, Earl of Lincoln.
<b>HENRY BOOTH,</b> 2nd Lord Delamere. 1686, tried for treason. Apr 17, 1690, Created Earl of Warrington. Died Jan. 2, 1693-4.	<b>M.</b>
<b>GEORGE BOOTH,</b> second son of Henry, succeeded his father. Died Aug. 2, 1758.	<b>M. MARY,</b> daughter of John Oldbury, of London. Esq.
<b>MARY BOOTH,</b> only daughter of George Booth. Died 1772.	<b>M. HARRY GRAY,</b> 4th Earl of Stamford, who succeeded to the Manor of Ashton, with other estates in Lanc. and Ches. Died May 30, 1768.
<b>GEORGE HARRY BOOTH GREY,</b> 5th Earl of Stamford. Died May 23rd, 1819.	<b>M. HENRIETTA CAVENDISH BENTINCK,</b> daughter of the 2nd Duke of Portland.
<b>GEORGE HARRY GREY,</b> 6th Earl of Stamford, 4th Earl of Warrington, Baron Delamere and Baron Grey, and Baron Bonville, &c., Lord Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum of Co. Chester. Died 1845.	<b>M. HENRIETTA CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH CHARTERIS,</b> daughter of the Right Hon. Francis Lord Elcho, son of Francis, 5th Earl of Wemyss. She died 1838.
<b>[SON.]</b>	
<b>GEORGE HENRY GREY,</b> succeeded his grandfather in 1845. He was 7th Earl of Stamford, Earl of Warrington, Baron Grey and Baron Delamere. He was born on the 23rd Dec., 1848. Died Jan. 2nd, 1883.	<b>M. 1st, ELIZABETH,</b> daughter of John Billinge, Esq., of Wincanton. She died in 1854.
	<b>M. 2nd, KATHERINE,</b> daughter of Henry Cocks, Esq.
	No issue.
	No issue.
Heir: Rev. Harry Grey, descendant of the 5th Earl, and cousin to late Earl.	



## The Old Hall.

### CHAPTER X.

Situation—Earliest Edifice—Its Appearance—The Bastile—Its Age—Visit of Several Antiquaries in 1862—Description of the Structure, &c.—Old Traditions, &c.

IT is generally believed that in Anglo-Saxon times the Thanes of Eston established a place of residence on the northern bank of the river Tame,<sup>(1)</sup> and there can be little doubt but that the Old Hall now stands on the site of that rude dwelling, erected in times of the Anglo-Saxon supremacy. At what date the Norman conquerors first supplanted that rude edifice with a suite of buildings better adapted to their modes of life cannot be determined; nor can it be stated with any approach to accuracy when that edifice in which Sir John Assheton lived in 1422, and of which we have now but the smallest vestige remaining, was superseded by the present building. All that we can assert with any degree of assurance is, that in the year 1380 the hall and yards were in a complete state. This is clear from a covenant preserved in the rent-roll, and made between the lord of the manor at that time and his tenants, prohibiting their swine from running in the "LITTLE PARK" and "HALL YARDS."

(1.) *Tame, Tam* (celt. *tan*), "spreading," broad, still; the *Thamesis*, the broad *Isis*; The *Tema*, *Tame*, *Tamar*, *Teme*; *Tay*. See *Etymol. Dict.*, Chambers.

A—V.

The present structure is not of very ancient date. Dr. Aikin states, that 1483 is the supposed date of the fabric,<sup>(2)</sup> which is undoubtedly true of parts of the present edifice. "In the reign of Henry VI., Sir John de Assheton resided here in a style of feudal grandeur, and with all that hospitality of manner which characterised the gentry of olden time. The great room, called the hall, was frequently a scene of rude festivity, when, if the amusements were not highly refined they were thoroughly jovial. Strict in the exaction of manorial dues, Sir John was generous to all whom he conceived deservedly merited his approbation. In accordance with the true spirit of chivalry he gave more countenance to the acts of war than those of peace; and whilst the bowmen were suffered to cluster around him on festive days, the rustics of the fields were placed beneath the men of arms." The appearance of the Old Hall in the present day is not very striking, except, when viewed from the opposite bank of the Tame, and even then, much of its original appearance is marred by the surrounding mills and houses, whilst from the west side it presents a dull, heavy appearance.

There is little left to aid the imagination in recalling those days of yore, when the Old Hall was the seat of the feudal lord, or to assist the mind in forming any adequate conception of what it was in its pristine condition; "surrounded by gateways, courtyards, moats, drawbridges, and earthworks."<sup>(4)</sup> It would then undoubtedly present a most formidable appearance as it stood on the rising ground at the bottom of which, the Tame in all its beauty meandered. "The free and intruding hand of modern improvements has gradually destroyed those needless works of defence, and the greater part of the mansion is as much modernised as its ancient form will allow. The pile is large and irregular. The south part of the building resembles a prison, and was used as such within the last century."<sup>(5)</sup> Dr. Aikin observes "that the Ash-

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(2.) *Forty Miles round Manchester*. Aikin, vol. i., p. 226.

(3.) *Hist. of Ashton*. Butterworth, ed. 1842, p. 28.

(4.) *Ibid.*

(5.) *Ibid.*

tonians once regarded the prison of the Old Hall as a kind of bastile to the town." The prison portion is a rather strong but small edifice, with two round towers, one at each angle, clothed in ivy and bearing a gloomy aspect. It is clear the offenders against the laws of the barons must have been few, judging from the accomodation provided for them. "These towers are designated 'The Dungeons.' They seem to have been conveniences for prisoners. They are not large enough for a person to live in, but seem to have been added to make the place look more formidable." A large room used to be hung with gilded leather, and there was a fine painting of St. George and the Dragon in the window. Handcuffs fastened to the wall were remaining not many years ago.<sup>(6)</sup> "Over the outer gateway was a square room, ascended to from the inside by a flight of stone steps, very ancient: and always known as the 'Jailer's Chapel.'"<sup>(7)</sup> Butterworth says—"It was supposed that prayers were occasionally read in it to the prisoners. This ruinous room was taken down in 1794. The adjacent house was inhabited by an aged man, who remembered a gate being opened through the house in 1733. On the west side of the Hall, the walls were strong and contained numbers of loopholes. A short distance is a close called the 'gallows field,' doubtless the place of execution."

Referring to the age of the building, the Rev. Canon Raines contends that the "Old Hall," which was "originally the feudal manorial residence, still retains marks of extreme antiquity," and states that "The round towers and square-headed trefoiled arches are of the time of Edward III, (1327-1377). There are later buildings of the era of Henry VI, (1422-1461), with additions made at the time of Queen Elizabeth, (1558-1603)."<sup>(8)</sup> In 1862 the Old Hall was visited by several antiquaries, who inspected the whole of the premises, concerning which one of them wrote "I am strongly inclined to the opinion

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(6.) *Hist. of Manchester, &c.* Aikin, vol. i., p. 226. See Barritt's MSS.

(7.) *Hist. of Manchester, &c.* Aikin, vol. i., p. 226.

(8.) *Notitia Castriensis*, printed for the Chetham Society.



that the dungeon is not older than the year 1500, but I believe that the Hall itself may be of the date of 1480, and probably some portions of it a little earlier. A couple of cusps in an arch do not make that arch trefoil, it is the archway itself that must be trefoiled. The trefoiled square-headed arches of the time of the Edwards are quite another thing from those existing in the dungeons. Indeed 1500 is as far back as I am inclined to go, and I should say a few years after that date would be more likely than a few years before. But after all it is not possible to speak positively to ten or a dozen years, as there can be little variation in such a short period, but the change is more apparent in 40 or 50 years.”<sup>(9)</sup>

The antiquarians referred to who visited the Old Hall in 1862, and made a thorough investigation of the premises at that time, were conducted by Mr. John Higson, of Droylsden, who obtained the result of their investigations, either in conversation or by correspondence, and putting their notes together produced a very interesting paper on the Old Hall, which was published in the *Ashton Reporter* in that same year, from which we extract the following particulars:—

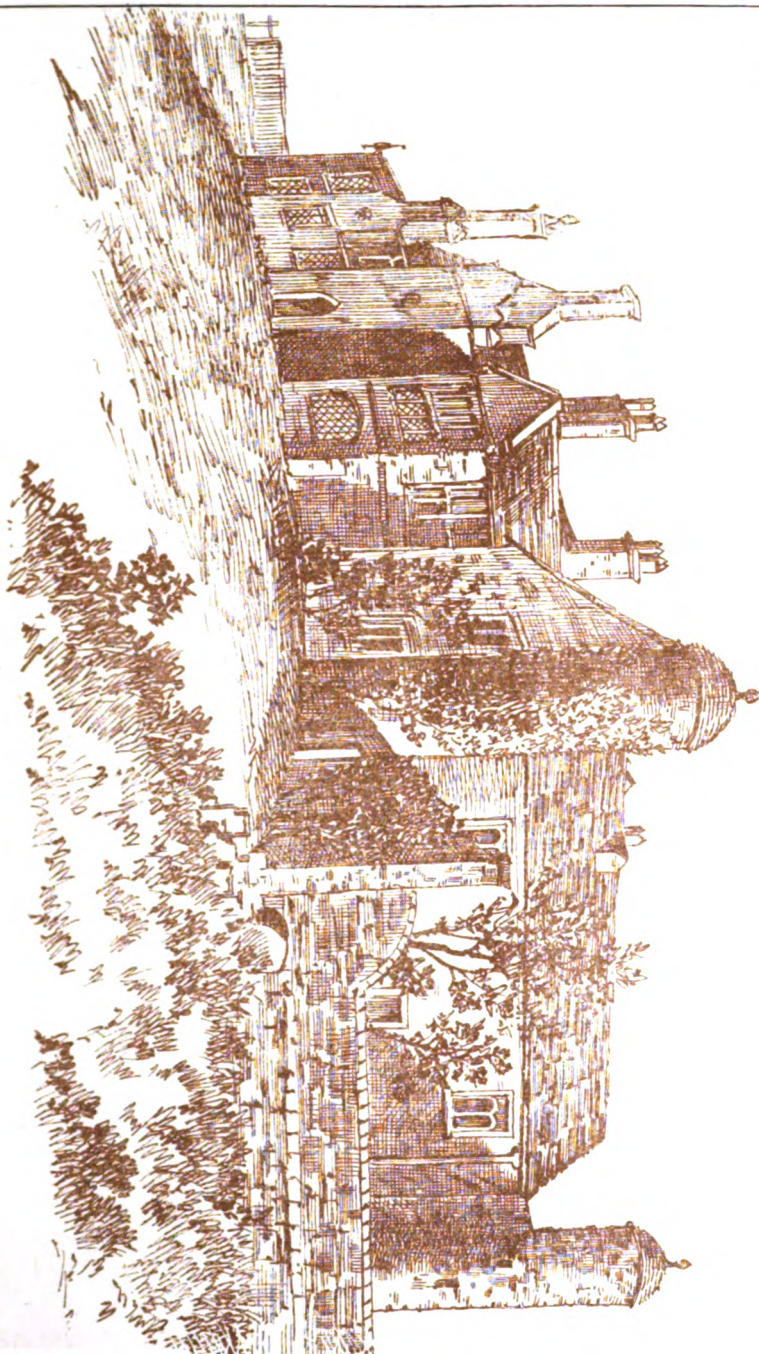
“The mansion at the present appears in the form of an angle, somewhat resembling the letter L. The Jailer’s Chapel was probably an off-short or irregular continuation of the dungeon wing, and some old buildings since removed, but then seeming to form a third side, and probably there had once been a fourth, thus rendering the edifice quadrangular. The northern gable is said to have had an entrance door leading towards the churchyard, but this we should doubt as it seems more likely that the ‘Oratory,’ subsequently the Parish ‘Kirk,’ would be approached either from a courtyard gateway on the north side, or from the western or present main front of the hall.

“The western front of the hall is covered with rough-cast, which effectually conceals both its beauties and defects. To add to the

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(9.) MSS. of John Higson.

ASHTON OLD HALL.  
South West View.



sullen, gloomy appearance of this heterogeneous structure, this adventitious coating is coloured *black*, probably to be in keeping with its once having been the residence of 'The Black Knight.' As the Hall stands on an elevated terrace, the look-out upon the valley through which glides the Tame, must have been at one time both pastoral and strikingly pretty; indeed it is said to have been so within memory; but houses, mills, and workshops, have gradually contracted the view, and the very valley itself is now almost gone before the rubbish deposited by the railway company. Some strong, old ivy plants, long since past their prime, tenaciously cling in the struggles of approaching dissolution, to this portion of the structure, and especially to the round tower at its corner. The outline is somewhat pleasing on the western side from its being diversified by two small gabled-bays, and two chimney-shafts, all of which project from the surface. One of the projecting bays has eaves, brackets, and a set-off. The basement or foundation, appears to be of no older date than 1670, as it displays a strong course usually appertaining to that period. The lower portion of it is used as a 'muniment room,' and is kept locked up, with deeds and documents inside which might considerably elucidate the history of the parish and its sub-proprietors. In front it exhibits a semi-circular window, within the upper part of a semi-circular headed arch, which has octagonal capitals on each side. The northern gable is furnished with modern scalloped barge boards, and the apex is crested with an ornamental finial.

"Turning to the eastern front, which is palisaded off, we notice the pillars to the entrance gate are surmounted by a couple of stone vases, with iron imitations of laurel plant in them. The doors and the windows on this side have all semi-circular headings, and over the main entrance door is an escutcheon bearing a representation of the family arms, crest, and supporters of the titled owner, the Earl of Stamford and Warrington, who occupies the house as a shooting box, when he visits the moors in the neighbourhood. Before the recent family

occupation the hall was divided into several dwellings, and the separate entrances and dormitory staircases still remain. The greater portion of this front is also rough-casted over, but its sombre, forlorn appearance, in summer at least, is somewhat relieved by the verdure of a single tree. A portion of this front, that adjoining the dungeon wing, and within the courtyard is a timber and daub erection built in the 'perpendicular' or 'postern-painted' style, assignable to the fifteenth century, as the upright lags or posts are not more than five inches apart.

"In the interior of the hall, the rooms are chiefly of limited dimensions and most effectually modernised, as every trace of antiquity is removed or concealed, so that its internal claims to 'ancientry' can only be obtained by a peep into the cellar, or an exploration through the attics or cockloft. The grey-slatted roof is remarkably steep except a small portion near the eaves, which is more obtuse in pitch. This had led us, before entering the premises, to infer that the front elevation had been brought outwards, or extended, sufficient to allow of the insertion of a passage, a corridor in front of the rooms or the banquetting hall, from which it or they had been entered. Although this lobby or corridor, has been superseded by another running the length of the eastern front, yet the old walls could not be entirely removed as they were required for the support of the roof. Hence in some of the lower apartments there are fireplaces and chimney flues formed out of the wall, standing out in the room, and imparting a curious appearance thereto. The windows in the east are divided by a stone mullion which branches off at the head, and one of them is stained or painted in the upper portion with twelve floral representations, and above them is a star, and this again is surmounted by the sun, both in allusion to the armorial bearings of the family. None of the memorials referred to by Barritt now exist. We noticed in one of the dormitories an old window divided into eight lights by splayed-mullions and transom, and filled in with small diamond-shaped quarrels. There was one ancient window glazed in the lozenge style and which may or may not have been one

of the slots or loop holes stated by Aikin to be existing on the west.

"Next we descended into the curious cellar, partly beneath the present dining room, but of very limited dimensions. The stairs or steps are of oak timbers pegged together, but now cased with deal slabs, an operation rendered necessary by the treading and usage of centuries. The external walls of the basement are very strong and massive, being some three or four feet in thickness, and in fact few portions of the exterior walls are less than 28 inches thick. Looking up at the ceiling we find that the floor of the rooms above are supported by thickly-grouped joists of oak which evidently point to a very remote date, or at all events show that the carpenters were not stinted for timber.

"Proceeding into the courtyard, and ascending by means of a friendly ladder to the second storey we entered by an aperture or doorway cut through the timber work, and found ourselves in a large square apartment open to the roof. But it had not always been so, as traces of the ceiling were perceptible from the remains of laths nailed to the undersides of the tie beams. Opposite to us, on the other side of the room was a projecting bay, lighted by a large square window broken into twelve lights by mullions and transoms. Advancing within this recess it was clear that in addition to the front window there had been one on each side, also square but narrower, having mullions and transoms, but now built up. All the mouldings about them were lozenge shaped with hollow sides. On the left or south side of the apartment was a square headed fireplace, having a sunk quarter moulding up the sides and across the lintel which was very slightly pointed. Getting the ladder we peered over the wall on each side of the chimney-shaft but could discern nothing more than the lofts in the adjoining building or prison, shrouded in darkness, and only perceptible at all from a stray ray of light through the chinks of the roof. In addition to the bay window there was one opposite which looked into what was once a courtyard, and is still enclosed by a wall. Between this window

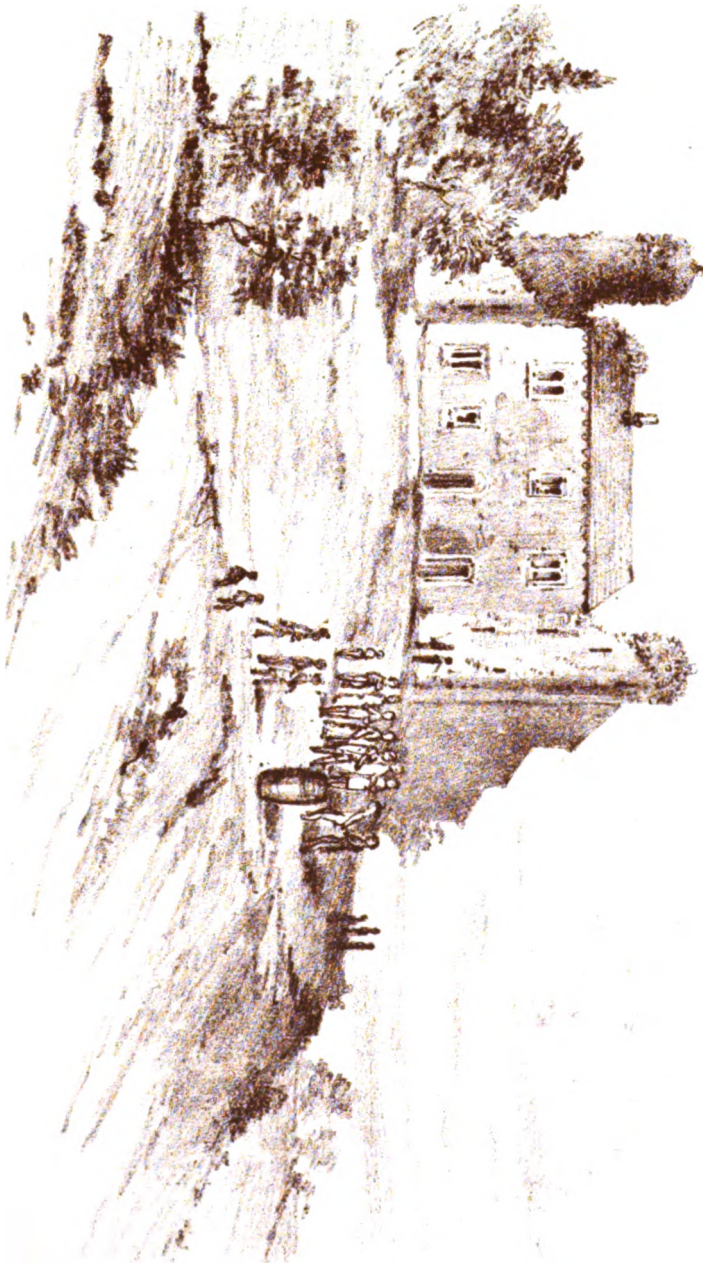
and the aperture through which we entered is a portion of oak wainscoting disposed in panels some twelve or fourteen inches square, but not reaching higher than five feet. There is no communication with this apartment (now devoted to storage and lumber) from any other room, but there seemed to be faint traces of the head of a doorway on the northern side.

“The way to the attics is from this apartment, and, after stripping some and adjusting the rest of our garments for cases of emergency, we prepared to penetrate within the hidden mysteries with lighted candles in our hands. Before venturing to do so we were warned to tread on the joists, as a bulky predecessor, a learned *savan*, some four or five years before, made sad havoc by stepping on the plaster work and popping his leg through the newly-decorated ceiling. Approaching the northern gable we found it to consist of a king post and tie beam. On each side of the king post is a vertical rib or brace, forming the gable into four compartments, which are filled in with diagonal braces. For some reason or other the wall-plate on the west has disappeared, but the principals seem to die into the wall. The ‘Banqueting Hall’ must have been open to the rafters originally, as the spaces between the principals and purlins are formed into squares, and filled with handsome quarter-foilings and multa-foilings of timber. No one, it is certain, would bestow such an amount of ornament and embellishment and then hide it behind a ceiling. No remains exist either of a dais or gallery along one side of the room, with the intention to accommodate the lord and his family. However, it appears that the manners of the times having changed, hospitality degenerated, and the feasting of the tenantry and retainers on a large scale having become less frequent or obsolete altogether, and the manor house itself having early in the sixteenth century passed into a non-resident’s possession, the edifice was sub-divided and let to several occupants. This led to the hall being shorn of its lofty appearance by floors and ceilings for dormitories being inserted, and thus it has lost much of its ancient appearance.

B—V.

“ The wing styled the dungeon now overlooks a courtyard on the north, and on the south, where, perhaps, was another courtyard, towards the township of Dukinfield. It consists of a centre, flanked at each end or corner by a circular tower which stands a little in advance. These towers rise considerably higher than the ridge of the roof appertaining to the main building, and form a peculiarity some think indicative of a very remote origin. They are furnished with globular roofs, though one has given way and lost its symmetry, and the centre stones or caps are pierced and supplied with finials. At the foot of each tower is a doorway, but apparently of recent construction. The walls are very strong, measuring in the lower parts about 30 inches in thickness. The interior is square, and has a partition wall carried two storeys high, from which point the structure is finished off as a circular tower. These storeys correspond with those in the main building, and, as the door-hangers testify, have had access from them. Adjoining the room which we first entered is another doorway into a narrow brick building, inserted against the angle formed by the hall and the dungeon; and being on the same level, we stepped from one doorway into the other, and immediately found ourselves opposite two others. One of these gave access to the upper storey of the dungeon, but the other was built up. They are both arched, and probably of the time of Henry VIII., from 1509-1547, having the sides of the arch flattened so as to become almost straight lines with chamfered edges. An external flight of steps, striking the wall between them, must once have led up to these doorways, and the reason for their being placed so close together was that the upper storey was divided into two apartments by a cross wall formed of ribs of timber. Some of the walls, however, are composed of twisted radlings and daub intermixed with rushes and straw. The roof timbers are plain, and consist of principals connected by collars, and strengthened by curved braces. The west end of this room was found to be built up and not accessible, but it is lighted by a window, which seems to have been broken through the wall for that purpose. Through





*Penal Punishments — The Spinal Cash.*



an aperture in the cross wall we crept into the other room, where we found a fireplace, there being none in the lower storey, and no internal communication between it and the upper one."

There are few old halls destitute of weird tradition, or some unseemly ghost story, nor is Ashton Old Hall an exception. One of many ghost stories oft repeated in the last century has been preserved. It was told, says Higson, by an old man who formerly lived in one of the cottages into which the edifice was divided, and was to the effect that he had frequently, after dark, seen haggard apparitions smeared with gore; the shades, as he believed, of victims of olden time who had been unjustly imprisoned in the dungeons and then put to death. It is well known that there was a time when the lords of Assheton had "absolute power of life and death," and the "Gallows Field," a meadow to the west of the hall (now fast disappearing), was selected by the feudal lords as a place convenient to execute in the most summary manner their disobedient menials:—

When Lords could hang their serfs at once,  
Nor give a reason why;  
And ladies loved the tourney most  
Where most were doomed to die.

Another old tradition in the neighbourhood runs to this effect: — "That formerly the lords of Ashton would, sometimes, when putting their offenders to death, enhance the punishment and amuse themselves by causing the culprits to be placed naked in casks, the internal sides of which bristled with sharp iron spikes, and then order them to be rolled down the "Gallow's Hill, in front of the hall." The side of the slope next to the dungeons has, even within memory, been known as "Anne's Brow." "It might seem a corruption," says Higson, "of Thene's Brow, as Thene's Car is several times alluded to in the old rental." But it is popularly alleged that some poor woman whose surname, if she had any, is forgotten, but whose Christian name was Anne, was condemned to be rolled down the hillside in the spiked cask just referred to.



## Ecclesiastical History.—Episcopacy.

### CHAPTER XI.

#### FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY INTO BRITAIN TO THE 13TH CENTURY.

The British Church—The Romish Church—The Parish of Manchester—The Churches of Manchester—Was the St. Michael's, mentioned in the Domesday Book, in Ashton or Manchester ?

IT has been customary for some historians to refer the origin of the Christian Church in Britain solely to the efforts of the Roman Missionaries ; but there are authorities of a very trustworthy character who contend that long before the advent of the Pope's emissaries the gospel had been preached and a Christian Church established in this island.<sup>(1)</sup> Many of the ancient Britons, as early as the beginning of the third century, had been half weaned from their Paganism, and had become votaries of the Christian faith.<sup>(2)</sup> To overlook this fact, therefore—that long before Gregory the Great beheld the "Yorkshire Lads"<sup>(3)</sup> in Rome, and determined

(1.) See *Students' Hume*, p. 15.

(2.) Of the early propagation of Christianity in Britain, Tertullian is a witness ; [Adv. Ind. c. 7]. Even though, from the rhetorical nature of the passage, there may be some little exaggeration in the statement that the gospel had already penetrated into those parts of Britain not subject to the Roman dominion. See Neander's *Church History*, p. 118, vol. i.

(3.) Some *Yorkshire youths*, who had been taken to Rome, were standing in the Slave Market, when their "fair hair and blue eyes" attracted the notice of Gregory, who inquired of what nation they were. The reply was "*Angli*." He then asked the name of their country. "*Deira*" (the old name for Yorkshire), was the answer. "*De ira Dei*," cried Gregory, "We must deliver them. And what is the name of your King?" The lads answered "*Alla*." "*Alleluia*," rejoined the incorrigible punster, "is the song they shall learn to sing." See *Rome from the Fall of the Western Empire*, by Canon Trevor, M.A., p. 97.

to send the gospel to their country, the British Church included many of the Aborigines among its adherents—is most misleading. “A tradition,” says Dr. Neander, “given by Bede, in the eighth century, reports that Lucius, a British king, requested the Roman Bishop Eleutherus, in the latter part of the second century, to send missionaries to that country.”<sup>(4)</sup> Thus it would appear that the British Christian Church, if not founded by the Roman missionaries sent by Gregory, was, nevertheless, indebted to Rome for its instruction in the first instance. But there is reason to believe that it was otherwise. Hence, says Neander, as a warning against placing too much reliance upon the tradition given by Bede, “The peculiarities of the later British Church are evidence against its owing its origin to Rome; for in many points it dissented from the usage of the Romish Church, and agreed much more closely with the churches of Asia Minor. It withstood, for a long time, the authority of the Bishops of Rome. This circumstance seems to indicate that the Britons received Christianity, either immediately, or through Gaul, from Asia Minor—a thing quite possible and easy by means of commercial intercourse;”<sup>(5)</sup> and he accounts for the tradition already cited by affirming that “The latter Anglo-Saxons, who opposed the Ecclesiastical independence maintained by the Britons, and endeavoured to establish the supremacy of Rome, were uniformly disposed to trace the establishment of the church to a Roman origin.”<sup>(6)</sup>

That the British Church had become influential as early as the beginning of the fourth century, is evinced by the fact that “At the first Council of Arles, in 314, three British Bishops appeared, namely, Eborius of York, Restitutus of London, and Adelfius, probably of Lincoln; whose tenets are said to have differed from those of the Romish Church.”<sup>(7)</sup> As an illustration of the amount of Christian activity in those early

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(4.) Neander's *Church Hist.*, vol. i., p. 118.

(5.) *Ibid.*

(6.) *Ibid.*

(7.) *Students' Hume*, p. 15.

times, it is stated that "The Bible was translated into the British tongue, and that some of the British Ecclesiastics were famous for their learning and acuteness."<sup>(8)</sup> It is clear, therefore, that prior to the day of Gregory the Great, the principles of Christianity had been disseminated in Britain, and not without considerable success. But the Christian Churches, which were subsequently planted in Northumbria, among which was the Church of Manchester, to which the Chapel of Ashton was appurtenant, were to all intents and purposes Roman.

In A.D. 627, Edwin, King of Northumbria, was baptized by Paulinus,<sup>(9)</sup> Bishop of York, and from that date synchronises that period of Christian activity in Northumbria which resulted in the proclamation of the gospel and the spread of Christianity in Manchester and district. From the above date western modes of thought prevailed to such an extent that the Romish Church and ritual henceforth were triumphant for several centuries, not only in this district but throughout the greater part of England.

It was during the Anglo-Saxon period that Manchester is supposed to have been made a parish,<sup>(10)</sup> and also that the first church was planted there, to which Ashton was "appurtenant." Reilly, referring to this parish church, says:—

"It was in the reign of Edwin that the Angles of the North first embraced the Christian religion. The king and court received baptism at the Easter of 627,<sup>(11)</sup> from the hands of Paulinus of York; and the conversion of the people soon followed. Shortly afterwards a church appears to have been erected at

(8.) *Students' Hume*, p. 15.

(9.) The pious design had been conceived many years before, while Gregory was abbot of a Monastery in Rome. [Bed. *Hist. Ecc.* ii. i.] From his own letters we learn that intelligence had reached him of a desire on the part of the English themselves for conversion to the Christian faith. [Lib. vi., ep. 58, 59.] See Hardwick's *Church Hist. Middle Age*, p. 6, note.

(10.) The original parish priest would be the minister of the village community or chaplain of the lord of a franchise, and the parish in most cases would coincide with the territory of the community or franchise. See Bingham, bk. ix., ch. viii. Hardwick's *Hist. Middle Age*, p. 45, note 1.

(11.) It has been stated that there were other influences which tended to bring about the conversion of Edwin, [Bed. ii., 9, 12]. Among other predisposing causes, was a letter from Boniface V. (625), accompanied by a present, and the "benedictio protectoris vestri B. Petri apostolorum principis," but his conversion did not occur till two years later. See Hardwick's *Church Hist. Middle Age*, p. 12, note.

Manchester, *and the parish formed.*<sup>(12)</sup> This ancient church was dedicated to St. Michael.<sup>(13)</sup> It stood near the centre of the town of Manigeeceaster, or Aldport Town, and in the immediate vicinity of Castle Field, the site of the Roman station Mancunium, which, previous to this time, had been converted into a Saxon *burh*, or castle. This church of St. Michael, subsequently mentioned in the Domesday Book, was endowed by some of the Saxon lords with a carucate of land. Some fragments of rudely-carved stone, found in the neighbourhood of Castle Field, now preserved in the Museum of the Natural History Society, Peter Street, are supposed to have formed part of this ancient church.<sup>(14)</sup>

In another place he writes :—

“ About this period (923), and probably in consequence of the commands of Edward [the Elder], a new town arose about half-a-mile to the North of Aldport, or the old town, on the site which was, no doubt, suggested by its proximity to the Safe Ford [whence its name Salford], which connected the neighbouring town of Salford with that of Manchester. The Church of St. Mary, mentioned in the Domesday Book, and which appears to have stood near the upper end of the present St. Mary's Gate, was the centre of this new town.”<sup>(15)</sup>

Such is Reilly's explanation of the origin and situation of the

(12.) Soon after the introduction of Christianity into this country the heathen temples and other buildings were converted into churches or places of assembly, to which the inhabitants of the surrounding district came to receive instruction from the minister, and to receive the rites of Christian worship. As the members of the new religion increased, a single or occasional minister was insufficient for the purpose; and a bishop, with subordinate priests, began to reside in the immediate neighbourhood of the religious houses, having the charge of districts of various extent, comprehending several towns and villages, and assigned principally with a view to the convenience of the inhabitants in assembling together at the church. Within these districts or *circuits*, as they were called, which were precisely analogous to the diocesan *parishes* in other parts of Europe, the ministering priests itinerated for the exercise of their *shriving*. By degrees other churches were built to meet the demand for public worship, but still at first wholly depending upon the Mother Church, and supplied by the bishop from his family of clergy resident at the bishopric with ministers and curates, who were supported by the common stock of the diocese. It has been asserted by Camden (*Britannia*, p. 160), and was formerly the commonly received opinion, that Honorius, the first Archbishop of Canterbury, after Augustine, divided his provinces into parishes about the year 630, but Selden proves that Honorius could not have made a parochial division in the sense in which we now understand the term; and that, if made at all, it must have been such a distribution into districts, *then called parishes*, as above described, and which was so far from originating with Honorius, that it must have been as ancient as bishoprics. See *Political Cyclopadia*, Bohn Series, vol. iii., p. 451.

(13.) In the reign of Edwin, says Baines, the missionaries from Rome began to spread the doctrine of the Christian Church in this place (Manchester), as well as in other parts of England, and thousands received the rite of Christian baptism by the hands of Paulinus. The parish was soon after formed, and a parish church, dedicated to St. Michael, was erected in Aldport. The increase of the town soon rendered another church necessary, and St. Mary's, supposed to have stood at the top of St. Mary's Gate, completed the Saxon Ecclesiastical establishment of Manchester. See *Hist. of Lancashire*, vol. ii., p. 167.

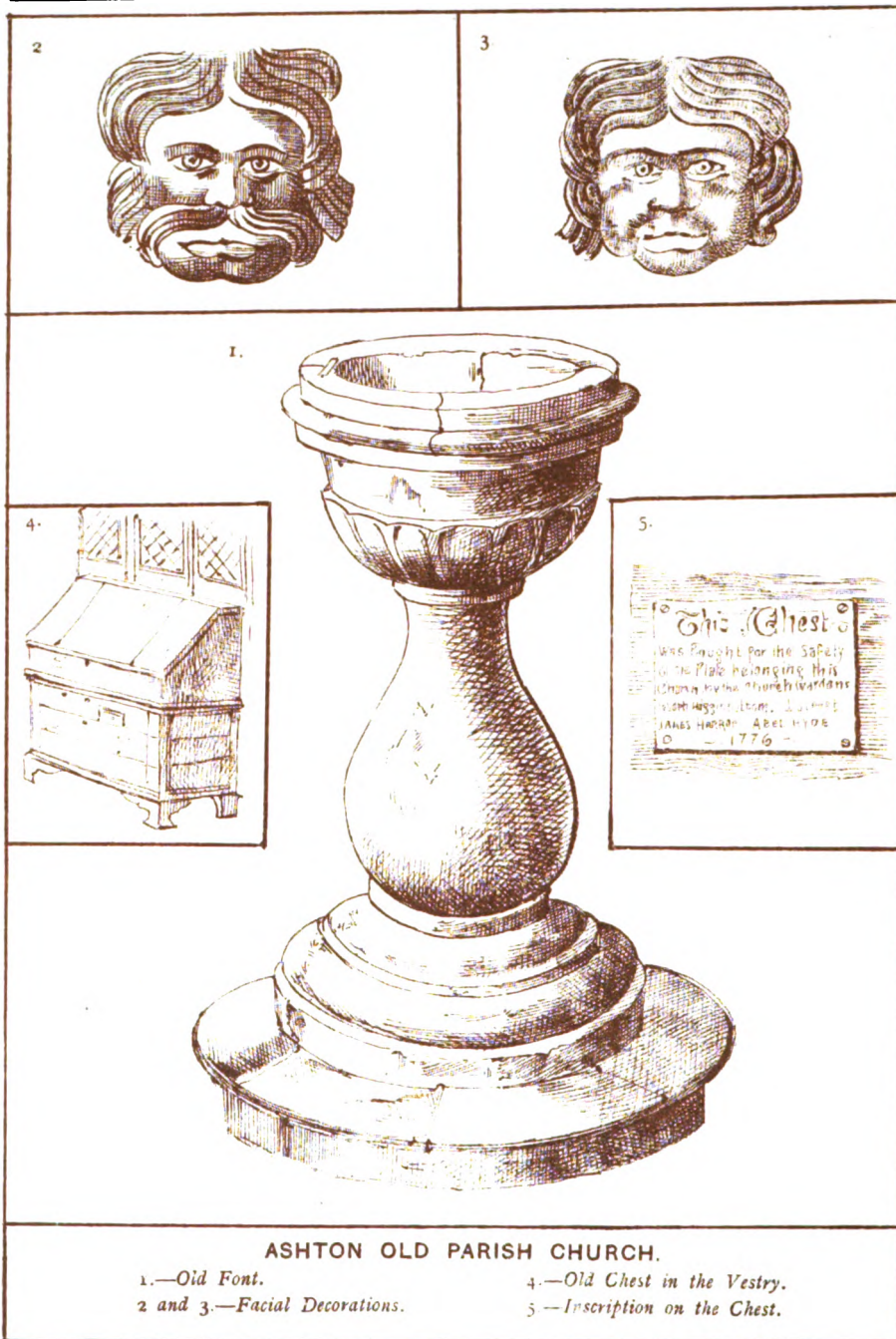
(14.) *Hist. of Manchester*. Reilly, p. 18.

(15.) *Hist. of Manchester*. Reilly, p. 22.

two churches known as St. Mary's and St. Michael's. But on turning to the Domesday Book we find that the statement referred to—which, in truth, is the only reference to any churches in this district—is as follows:—"The church of St. Mary and the church of St. Michael, *hold in Mamecestre* one carucate of land, free from all customs but the gelt." Concerning the proper meaning to be attached to the words, translated, *hold in Mamecestre*, there has been much controversy. It has been suggested that it may possibly mean that St. Michael's was not *in* Manchester, but rather *under* Manchester, and at Ashton-under-Lyne. This opinion seems to derive some support from the fact that the "advowsons were held by the barons of Manchester, and, again, that the Ashton Church or Chapel was appended to that of Manchester."

John Higson, in an article published in the *Ashton Reporter* contends—"That it is a debatable point as to whether St. Michael's holding land in Manchester, was located in Manchester proper, or in Ashton-under-Lyne," and in reply to those persons who assert that if it had been in Ashton, it is highly probable that it would have been mentioned in the "Dom boc" as located there: he adds:—"If a church is not mentioned in the 'Dom boc' as existing at the latter place, that omission is not decisive evidence of the non-existence of such a church, as it is evident that the 'Dom boc' only enumerates such churches as had endowment lands to be taxed. There is indisputable evidence of many parish churches which were passed over in silence in that record for the reason just assigned. But, however this may be, soon after the Conquest [1066], Ashton had its baronial hall, inclusive of outworks, moat, drawbridges, &c., and nestling in close vicinity for the purpose of protection were the wattled huts, and rude dwellings of the serfs of the lord of Assheton. Perhaps in close contiguity stood the 'Charity Oratory,' or domestic chapel. In those times domestic chapels, or chantries, not unfrequently stood in a meadow field, a short distance from the hall. They were not usually consecrated; nevertheless, burials frequently took place about them."

C—V.



On the 21st of April, 1853, a letter appeared in the *Manchester Guardian*, headed, "Had Manchester two churches at the time of the Conquest?" It was signed J.H.—D. Some persons have supposed that John Harland was the author of it, but most probably it was from the pen of John Higson, of Droylsden. It contains some of the strongest statements we have met with in favour of the contention that the church, designated St. Michael's in the Domesday Book, was situated in Ashton-under-Lyne. We, therefore, annex a copy for the reader's perusal :—

"It has often been asserted, but apparently on a very slight foundation, and never sufficiently verified, that at the conquest the town of Manchester contained two churches, viz., St. Mary's and St. Michael's. A few days ago, whilst perusing the 'Foundations in Manchester' (vol. iv., p. 3), I met with the oft-reiterated statement, first broached, I believe, by Whitaker, respecting the Domesday St. Michael's Church being situated in Aldport. In vain did I search for confirmatory proof, but no *bona fide* evidence was adduced, and only one or two vague and disputable conjectures were offered in support of this supposition. The Domesday account is 'The Churches of St. Mary and St. Michael *hold in Mamecestre* one carucate of land.' Now if this carucate of land does, as Dr. Hibbert-Ware and other antiquaries suppose, constitute the present hamlet of Kirkmanshulme, which is not in the township but parish of Manchester, may not the same latitude of expression allow of one of the two churches being locally situate *in the parish* but yet *not in the township* of Manchester? At an early period churches evidently existed in Prestwich, Eccles, Rochdale, Stockport, &c., and in all probability these places were not of greater note or density of inhabitants than Ashton-under-Lyne. The then inhabitants of Manchester township were not so numerous as to require two separate churches to accommodate them; and, supposing the old town (or city) as then existing near the present St. Matthew's and the newer one near the present Cathedral, the distance between them was not so great at a period when some of the parishioners would have to travel four or five miles in order to frequent either of the churches. Therefore, is it not reasonable to conclude that St. Mary's, the first named, implying seniority, was the Mother Church in Manchester, and the other, St. Michael's, the affiliated Chapel of Ease in Esdern, or Eston, or Ashton? Ashton Old (parish) Church is dedicated to the Archangel, and according to Butterworth's History of Ashton (pp. 7, 10), 'Ashton was the residence of a Saxon chief, and was originally included in the Saxon parish of Manchester. The first edifice was a Chapel of Ease to Manchester; and the first Saxon possessor held the manor in fee of the greater lord of Manchester.' And again (p. 12), 'Of the lesser barons, of Roger of Poitou



was Albert Grelle, who held in fee the barony and parish of Manchester, to which the Manor and Chapel of Ashton-under-Lyne were appurtenant.

"The fact of the endowment being participated in by a Chapel of Ease, is accounted for by the following extract from the 'Foundations in Manchester' (vol. iv., p. 19):—'A law was enacted in the time of the Saxons, that when more than one church rose up in a parish, the younger participated in the endowment of the older one, even to a third, and shared with her in all tithes and oblations, save the church *scot*, which was continued to the Mother Church as an acknowledgment of her superiority.' An erased passage in Hollingworth's MS., Chronicles of Manchester, says that 'That place at the time of the conquest was in a low and servile condition.' The same authority also says, 'That the Domesday Book also mentions a church called St. Michael's, though of this I find not the least memorial,' and then suggests that the two churches mentioned in that record both stood in one churchyard, whence it appears that if St. Michael's ever existed in the township of Manchester at all, no tradition of its site was then extant. No other than the Domesday mention of this supposed church is anywhere met with.

"About the middle of the 12th century a grant of land was made to the church of Manchester; this has been supposed to indicate that one of the two (St. Michael's) had prior to that period fallen into disuse; but it rather appears that the affiliated Chapel of Ashton was not intended to share in this bequest. Again, 'The most satisfactory indication of the existence of St. Michael's Kirk within the precincts of Aldport, is that which was first commented upon by Whitaker, viz., the annual mart which is still kept up in an open space adjoining the Castle Field, named Knott Mill Fair. The learned historian of Manchester has supposed this annual commemoration to have arisen from the Feast of Dedication. This, I think, is a very insufficient reason, seeing that the Wakes, being subject to the caprice of the inhabitants, were sometimes changed from one season to another, as in many instances within memory, or were interfered with by Acts of Parliament, and by the Puritans of the 16th and 17th centuries. Whitaker, phrenologically speaking, possessed an over large development of the organ of constructiveness, and even the more cautious author of the 'Foundations in Manchester,' though not often, yet sometimes at least, let loose the reins of fancy; several instances might be cited, some of which, however, he afterwards corrected.

"In conclusion, it is evident that the Domesday account, as generally translated, does not, in fact, specifically assert that either the township or the parish of Manchester was the locale of either of the two churches which held the carucate of land therein; and at the best the question of so small a place as Manchester was then, containing two churches, I think a very debatable point.

"April 21st, 1853.

"J.H.—D."

On the other hand, those who contend that St. Michael's was situated in the township of Manchester, suppose, that the "Old Church, St. Michael's," had ceased to exist early in the 12th century; for about the middle of that century Albertus Greslet gave four bouvates of land from his lordship to the church at Manchester "in pure and perpetual alms." This is the same gift referred to in the letter just quoted, and is supposed, says Reilly, "to have composed a glebe in and near Deansgate, between the Old and New Town of Manchester; and as it was given to the 'persona,' or parson of the adjoining church of St. Mary, it received the name of the Parsonage. From the fact of this land being granted to the Church of Manchester, and no mention being made of the second church, we may infer that only one church existed at this time in the town, and that this church was that of St. Mary, *the older one of St. Michael in Aldport* having doubtless disappeared, the annual fair held on the feast of its dedication being *all that recalled* its having existed." <sup>(16)</sup>

If this view be correct, the difficult question still remains, namely, when was the Parish Church of Ashton first called St. Michael's? Those who maintain that St. Michael's was *in* Manchester reply, that the Parish Church of Ashton, in the earliest period of its history, is only known as the *Chapel of Ashton*. This is clear from Kuerden's MS., where it is stated "that Thomas Greslet <sup>(17)</sup> gave to Peter Greslet, his son, the churches of Manchester and Childwall, with the *Chapels of Ashton*, Hale, and Garston, to the said churches appertaining." <sup>(18)</sup> They suppose

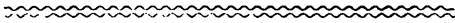
(16.) *Hist. of Manchester*. Reilly, p. 41.

(17.) Thomas Greslet died in the 46 Henry III. (1261-2.)

(18.) Tho. Grelle dedit P. de Grelle filio suo manerium de Manchester et Childwalle cum capellis de Asheton, Hale et Garston dictis ecclesiis pertinentibus. Kuerden's MS. ii., 282. It would appear that although this grant was made, that it was not carried into effect. Hence, says Reilly, Thomas Greslet, the sixth baron of Manchester, had, as we have seen, two sons, Robert and Peter, the former of whom died during the lifetime of his father, leaving an infant son, Robert, who became eventually the seventh baron. Peter, the second son, appears to have been a priest, and to him Thomas Greslet, to the prejudice of his grandson (son of Robert deceased), wished to convey the manor of Manchester, together with the chapels of *Ashton*, Hale, and Garston, making a grant to that effect. But this arrangement was not permitted to be carried out, though strenuous efforts were made for that purpose, and the king sent orders to the sheriff to take possession of and retain in safe keeping the estates of Thomas Greslet. See Reilly, *Hist. of Manc.*, p. 65. *Excerpta & Rotullis Finium*, vol. ii., p. 372.

that the chapel of Ashton took the name of St. Michael,—“who was generally accounted the patron saint of hilly and mountainous parishes,”—when it was severed from its parent stock and made a separate parish.

Whether St. Michael's mentioned in the Domesday Book was located in Manchester town, or parish—that is, at Ashton-under-Lyne—is difficult to determine, but after much research we are unable to agree with the writer of the letter, signed J.H.—D., already referred to. His inferences are chiefly drawn, as was pointed out by the Editor of *The Manchester Guardian* at that time, from negative evidence. And, as was stated at the time by the same authority, it cannot be fairly disputed “That the older Vill and Castle of Manchester were in or near Castle Field; and that subsequently, when the town was restored, after the ravages of the Northmen, the Saxon Vill was near the present Cathedral, and the baronial Castle on the site of the present Chetham's Hospital. Now every Vill and Castle at that period had its Church; every Church its dedication to a Saint; and every fair or wake, originally held in the church-yard, was usually celebrated on the day on which the church commemorated its tutelar Saint. These facts seem to point to the *two Churches* of St. Michael and St. Mary both being situate within the modern city of Manchester.” There can be little doubt that Higson brought a considerable amount of prejudice into his discussion of the subject, which tended to affect the conclusions he obtained from the very slender premises upon which he sought to construct his argument. Evidently he desired that the St. Michael's of the “Dom boc” should be identified with St. Michael's in Ashton, and the desire, rather than *bona fide* historical evidence, became the origin of his inferences.



## FROM THE 13TH CENTURY TO THE REFORMATION.

Ashton made a Parish—*Valor Beneficiorum*—William de Marchia usurps the Patronage—The De la Warres—Thomas De la Warre, Rector of Ashton and Baron of Manchester, conveys to Sir John de Assheton, K.B., the Advowson, &c.—John Huntingdon—Seats in the Parish Kirk.

**T**HAT the earliest Ecclesiastical edifice in Ashton was a Chapel of Ease to the Church of Manchester is fully admitted, and worship would undoubtedly be conducted by itinerating priests from the parent Church at the same place. This Chapel, there can be little doubt, would also be assimilated to the Mother Church in form of worship, and to some extent participate in the same ritual, which, as we have already seen, was distinctly Roman.

It is generally believed that Ashton was made a parish about 1280. If so, then for many years after that date it was wholly, or to a great extent, dependent on the parent Church, and the advowson belonged to the Lords of Manchester, who also held the advowsons of the churches of Manchester and Childwall. Hence it is recorded that on the death of Robert Greslet, which took place on the 15th of February, 1282, it was found that he had left a son and heir of the tender age of three years, who, in consequence, became the King's ward. "This state of things rendered necessary the issue of writs to inquire into the possessions of the deceased baron, the age of the heir, and other matters required by the law. The survey took place at Manchester on Sunday, April the 25th, 1282, before Thomas de Normanville and twelve jurors, who found, upon their oaths, among other things, that there were three churches which belonged to the gift of the lord, namely, the churches of Manchester and Childwall, worth £133 6s. 8d., and Ashton-under-Lyne, worth £13 6s. 8d. A second extent was taken at Manchester, before Henry Lee, Sheriff of Lancashire, on Sunday, May 3rd, 1282, when the jurors returned

the advowsons of the churches of Manchester and Childwall as before, at £133 6s. 8d., but gave that of Ashton at £20."<sup>(1)</sup> In 1291-2, according to Pope Nicholas's *Valor Beneficiorum*,<sup>(2)</sup> the "Ecclesia de Aston" was valued at £10 per annum—tenth £1.

In consequence of the infancy of the son of Robert de Greslet, the Barony of Manchester was placed in the custody of a person named Amadeus de Savoy. During the minority of Thomas Greslet, we are informed in a roll of pleadings, 32 Edward I., that William Marchia, parson of Manchester, to which the chapel of Ashton was annexed, was made Bishop of Bath and Wells [21 Edward I., 1292], Thomas Grelle being then under age; and Walter de Langton, afterwards parson of Manchester, holding the chapel of Ashton in like manner, was made Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield [24 Edward I., 1295]. "Thomas Grelle said that the church of Ashton was dependent on the church of Manchester; and he said that Robert de Grelle, his father, was Patron of the Churches of Manchester and Ashton, and that he (Thomas) was under age at the time of the death of the said Robert, his father, and that *William de Marchia, of his own act, usurped the patronage whilst he (Thomas) was under age.*"<sup>(3)</sup>

According to the Episcopal Register of Lichfield, Nicholas d'Arderna, cler., or Adamus de Arderna, was Rector of Ashton in 1305, and was presented to the living by Thomas de Grelle.<sup>(4)</sup>

We now come to that period in the history of the Parish of Manchester when the Manor of Manchester and the advowsons

(1.) Reilly's *Hist. of Manch.*, pp. 65 to 68.

(2.) It was the practice of the Popes in the early period of our history to make contributions towards the expenses of the Holy Wars, and Pope Nicholas IV., imitating the example of Pope Innocent, granted the tenths of the Ecclesiastical Benefices in England to Edward I. for six years, to defray the expenses of his expedition to the Holy Land. That this revenue might be collected to its full value, a taxation, by the King's precept, was begun in the year 1288, and finished, as to the Province of Canterbury, in 1291, and, as to York, in the following year. This taxation is a most important record, because all the taxes, as well of our Kings as the Popes, were regulated by it, until the Survey made in the 26th year of Henry VIII., when the materials for the *Liber Regis*, usually called the "King's Book," were collected, and because of the Statutes of Colleges, which were formed before the Reformation, are also interpreted by this criterion.—Ellis on the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angl. et Wall.*, *Auctoritate P. Nicolai IV. Circa. A.D. 1291.* Cited by Baines in his *Hist. of Lanc.*, vol. ii., pp. 113, 114.

(3.) Kuerden's MS., at the end of the extent of the Manor of Manchester, extracted from the public records. *Pleas in Easter Term*, 32 Edward I. (1304), *Roll* 71.

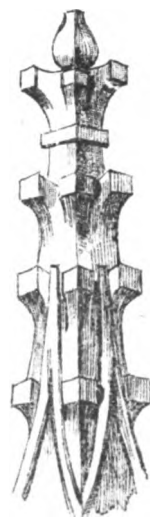
(4.) From Vernon's *Extracts from the Episcopal Register of Lichfield.* *Harl MSS.* 2075.

of the Churches of Manchester, &c., passed from the possession of the Greslets to the De la Warres. It occurred in the following manner:—

Thomas de Greslet, son of Robert de Greslet, and Baron of Manchester, was a bachelor. He had a sister named Joan, who was married to John De la Warre, Baron of Wickwar, in the County of Gloucester. Some time previous to his death, Thomas de Greslet went to reside with his sister Joan, at her residence at Wickwar, where he spent the remainder of his life. Whilst there, in March 1309, he made a formal grant of the Manor of Manchester and the *advowsons of the Churches of Mamecestre and Ashton-under-Lyne* to John De la Warre, Knight, and Joan, his wife, subject to a yearly payment to himself, during his life, of 100 marks (£66 13s. 4d.) Hence, after the Greslets had held large possessions in Lancashire for about 220 years, the greater part of these possessions “passed by distaff” to the Lords De la Warre. The original copy of this interesting Charter was once in the possession of Sir Oswald Mosley, Bart., which, having been published, has been thus preserved for the inspection of subsequent generations. The copy is recorded by Baines in his *History of Lancashire*, vol. ii., p. 537, ed. 1836.

John De la Warre, by this Charter, became ninth Baron of Manchester. In the year 1322, during his lordship's tenure, the extent of the Manor of Manchester was taken, in which Survey we meet with the declaration, namely, “That the Church of Manchester is worth 200 marks (£133 6s. 8d.), and is of the lord's presentation, to which Lord John De la Warre, now deceased, presented John de Crueden, who, having been instituted to the same, possesses that endowment, consisting of eight burgages in Manchester, and the Vills of Newton and Kirkmanshulme, together with the meadows, woods, pastures,

D—V.



and appurtenances. The Church of Ashton-under-Lyne, worth 40 marks (£26 13s. 4d.), is of the presentation of the lord, to which the lord, now last, presented Simon de Craneslegh, who, being instituted, possesses that endowment.”<sup>(5)</sup> According to a statement in the *Episcopal Register* of Lichfield, it would appear that, in 1324, Simon de Craneslegh had vacated the living, for in that year we find the name Simon Barnesley, Acolyte; but some authorities are inclined to believe that the two names represent the same person.

In 1353 Thomas Rodeford was rector, and was presented by Joan, wife of John De la Warre. In 1362 the living was held by Thomas, son of Thomas del Wyke, Rector of Manchester.

At the decease, in 1370, of Roger De la Warre, tenth Baron of Manchester, it was found that he held, conjointly with Alionora, his wife, the Manor of Manchester and the advowsons of the Churches of Manchester and Ashton. The eleventh and next Baron of Manchester was John De la Warre. During his lordship's tenure, Thomas De la Warre, brother of John above, was presented with the living of Ashton by Ludovicus Clifford, on the decease of Thomas del Wyke; and, consequently, we find his name among the Episcopal records of the Rectors of Ashton in 1371.<sup>(6)</sup> A short time subsequent to 1371 Thomas De la Warre became Rector of Manchester, and was succeeded at Ashton by John de Marchford, who appears to have held the living for the short period of one year, namely, from 1373 to 1374, in which year Henricus Nettleworth succeeded him.

On the 27th of July, 1398, John De la Warre died, and, being unmarried, the title reverted to his brother, Thomas De la Warre, Rector of Manchester, who, being a priest, succeeded in obtaining “a special exemption from attending the King in any of his Parliaments or Councils for the term of three years.” During his lordship's tenure two very important events occurred in the history

(5.) *Ecclia de Ashton Subterlineam*, val. 40 mc. est de p'sentacoe dni ad quam dns nunc vlt p'sentavit Symoem de Craneslegh clicum q'i nunc institut possidet ipsam dotatem.—*Harl. MSS.*, Cod. 2085, fol. 416.

(6.) *Vernon's Extracts from the Episcopal Register of Lichfield.*

of the Parish of Manchester. First, he obtained a Royal license to found, in the Parish of Manchester, a Collegiate Church.<sup>(7)</sup> Since St. Mary's and St. Michael's had disappeared, the "only edifice used for public worship in Manchester was a large erection of wood. The parishioners cheerfully concurred in the munificent design of the great feudal lord; and the arms of Stanley, Radcliffe, and Byron, emblazoned on the windows of the choir, prove that those families ranked amongst the pious benefactors."<sup>(8)</sup> Second: About this time, or not long before his death, Thomas De la Warre "gave to Sir John de Assheton, K.B., and to his heirs *for ever*, one rod of land, parcel of the Manor of Ashton, in a certain field (called Smith Field), *together with the Church of Assheton*, the said John de Assheton holding the Manor of Ashton-under-Lyne of Richard de Kirkeby, Knt., by payment of one penny, and that Richard holding it of Thomas De la Warre."<sup>(9)</sup> Thus the advowson passed into the hands of the Asshetons and their heirs.

During the lifetime of Sir John de Assheton a new Parish Church was erected in Ashton, probably upon the site of an old dilapidated building which had superseded a still ruder structure, which dated far back into the Anglo-Saxon period. The construction of this new building was commenced about the year 1413. It was dedicated to St. Michael during the rectorship of John Huntingdon, or Huntington, who, on that account, is styled "the founder of the Church in Ashton." In 1422 "John Huntingdon, bachelor in degree," and Rector of Ashton, was made first Warden of the Collegiate Church of Manchester, where the "venerable and

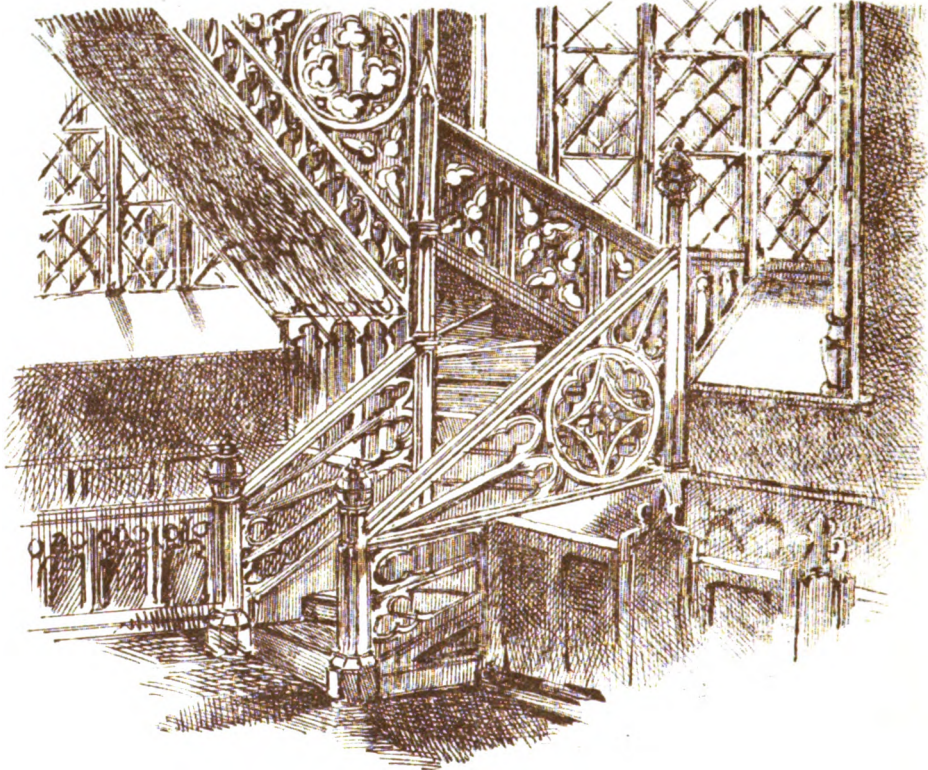
(7.) This license runs thus:—"That as the venerable father in Christ, Thomas, Bishop of Durham, John Henege, Nicholas Motte, Incumbent of the Church of Swinehead, Richard Lumbard, lately Incumbent of the Church of Hotham, and Richard Frithe, hold the Manor of Manchester with its appurtenances, together with the advowson of the Church of Manchester, by gift and feoffment, of Thomas de la Warre, clerk, the King, of his special favour, and in consideration of two hundred marks paid to him into the Hanaper Court, has granted and given permission that they may erect, or cause to be erected, by him to whom it belongs, the said Church of Manchester into a Collegiate Church, and that in and belonging to the said Church they may be able to make, found, and establish a certain College, with one Master or Warden, and as many Fellows and other Ministers as shall seem good to the said Bishop, John, Nicholas, Richard, and Richard, and to the said Thomas De la Warre."

(8.) Hollinworth's MS., fol. 10, cited in the *Hist. of Lanc.*, by Baines, vol. ii., p. 196.

(9.) *Harl MSS.*, Cod. 2085, fol. 410.



learned divine built the choir, and continued to occupy his dignified station for thirty-seven years." Hollinworth says of him, "that he was allowed to possess a considerable share of the learning



*Staircase leading to Lord Stamford's Family Pew.*

most in request during the times in which he lived." He died November 11th, 1458, and was buried in a vault in the choir, under the high altar as it then stood. Over that part of the vault which was "dedicated to the inhumation of his remains a stone was placed, in which was laid a plate of brass, representing him in sacerdotal vestments. The label proceeding from the mouth was strikingly expressive of the chief object of his zeal, 'Domine, dilexi decorem domus tuæ'—'O Lord, I have loved the beauty of thine house.'" The rebus of this warden is to be seen on either side of the middle arch, indicated on the left side by *hunting*,

and on the right side by a *tun*, which makes *Huntington*. On this subject Hollinworth, quoting from Camden's "*Remains*," remarks:—"This rebus or *name devyse*, a custome borrowed from the French, is to be seene on either syde of the middle arche, as it looketh eastwarde: on the one syde is an huntsman with dogges, whereby hee thought to expresse together the two syllables of his name—*Hunting*; on the other syde, a vessel called a *tonne*, which being joined together make *Huntington*." On a brass plate, fixed in the gravestone, was the following inscription, of which a considerable portion some time ago could be seen in the vault beneath the choir, to which place it was removed on the formation of the middle pavement:—

"Hic iacet Johan Huntingdon Bace. in Decr. Prim. Magister Sive Custos istius Collegii, qui de novo construxit istam Cancellam, qui obiit ximo. die ix (?) bris. MCCCCLVIII., Cuius animæ proprietur [propicietur] Deus,"<sup>(10)</sup>—"Here lies John Huntingdon, B.D., Master or Warden of this College, who anew constructed this Chancel, who died 11th November, 1458, on whose soul God have mercy."

It is also stated that the rebus of this venerable divine was once to be seen under several seats in St. Michael's Church, in Ashton, and that the hieroglyphics were similar to those in the Manchester Cathedral. In a similar way, under some of the seats in the latter place "there used to be some rude carvings of wood, which," says Higson, "related to several old families in the neighbourhood."

From the Rental and Custom Roll, we learn that Sir John de Assheton assigned the seats or benches to his tenants in the "Parish Kirk." Only the names of females appear in that record, from which it has been inferred that seats were first placed in churches solely for their use. Eighteen benches or sittings are mentioned for the occupation of one hundred wives and widows, who are named, besides their daughters and "servant wenches." Their husbands "were denied the same privilege, being forced to stand or kneel in the aisles, as the service required." The

(10.) See *Foundations in Manchester*, vol. i., pp. 42–46. Hollinworth's *Mancuniensis*, Willis's ed., pp. 43, 44. Camden's *Remains*. Baines's 4to, vol. ii., pp. 196–7. Aston's *Manchester*, p. 34.

document enumerating the number and position of the seats, also their respective occupiers, is both quaint and suggestive, a full account of which we give below :—

*At the first form upon the south-side of Assheton Kirk.*—Uxor Hered Henricii de Moston, Uxor de Shepley, Uxor Johannis de Heghrode, Uxor Rodi de Hunt, and the servant women of the Hall, and other gentill strangers.

*At the second form on the south-side.*—Uxor Radi de Bardisley de Hurst, Uxor Adæ de Leghes, Uxor Rici de Hurst, Uxor William Tyrre, Uxor de Blake Knolles, and their servants.

*The third form on the south-side.*—Uxor Thomas de Leghes, Uxor Joh. de Knolles de Leghes, Uxor Tenenti de Barsley, Uxor de Rasbotham, Uxor Adæ de Wilson de Knolles, Uxor Joh. de Aspynhalgh, Uxor Rodi de Hollinworth, and their servants.

*The fourth form on the south-side.*—The tenants of Rauf of Stayley, the tenants of Peter of the Lusley, the tenants of Thomas of Claydon, the tenants of Shepley, the tenants of John of the Heghrode.

*The fifth form on the south-side.*—The tenants [servant] wynches of Sir John Byron that dwelling with him.

*The sixth form on the same side.*—The Parson's tenants—Uxor Thomas Higson, Uxor Thomas de Curtnel, Carol Jenkyn daughter, Uxor —, Uxor Joh. de Bardesley, and the servants of the Woodhouse, and the strangers to the other form.

*At the first form upon the north-side.*—Uxor Thomas de Claydon, Uxor Rodi de Bardesley, Uxor de Sunderland, Uxor Raduphi de Wood, and their servants, and other gentill strangers.

*The second form on the north-side.*—Uxor Johannis de Leghes, Uxor Willi de Bardisley de ha, Uxor Roberti de Wright de Alt Hill, Uxor Rodi de Hadfield de Aldwinshagh, Uxor de Soureker, and their servants.

*The third form on the north side.*—Uxor Radi de Bardesley, Uxor Radi de Curtnal, Uxor Thos. de Mehtham [Meltham], Uxor Jacobi de Meltham, and their servants.

#### UXOR TENENTI RADI ASSHETON IN ASSHETON.

*The fourth form on the same side.*—Uxor Roberti de Cropper, Uxor Thomas del Leghes de Hazilhurst, Uxor Johannis de Hollinworth, Uxor Thomas Robinson, Uxor Regi le Baxter, and their servants.

*The fifth form on the same side.*—Uxor Rodi le Smyth, Uxor William le Cooke, Uxor Robti Fullstafte, Uxor Johannis de Wood, Uxor Robti Adamson, and their servants.

*The sixth form on the same side.*—Uxor John le Spencer, Uxor Robti de Walker, Uxor Willi de Bardesley de Holdome, Uxor Johannis Jameson, Uxor Willi Robinson, and their servants.

*The seventh form on the same side.*—Uxor de Milne, Uxor Robti Somayst, Uxor Robti Robinson, Uxor Gregori de Bardesley, Uxor Robti Saunderson, Uxor Johannis le Lyme.

*The first form upon the north, in the nether-end of the Kirke.*—Uxor Willi Aitkynson, Uxor Robti de Lyngards, Uxor John de Lyngards, Uxor Roger le Cropper, Uxor Johs. le Slater, Uxor Johis Burdetan, Uxor Thurstan de Bardisley, Uxor Milto de Cross, and their servants.

*The second form on the same side.*—Uxor Adæ de Bardisley, Uxor Willi de Walker de Ryecroft, Uxor Robti Robinson, Uxor Will tett Robti de Walker, Uxor Rodi Toneson, Uxor Rodi Wilkinson, Uxor Johis Sanderson, Uxor Richi Sanderson, Uxor Thomas Adamson, Uxor Willi le Sclater, and their servants.

*The third form on the same side.*—Uxor Thomas Sanderson, Uxor Robti Unton, Uxor Willi de Cowleshaw, Uxor Rodi Unton, Uxor Johis de Mercer. Uxor Hugh de Gatecliffe, Uxor Willi de Woodfield, Uxor Roger le Smith, Uxor Thomas le Coke, Uxor Robti le King, and their servants.

*The fourth form on the same side.*—Uxor Johis le Coke, Uxor Thomas le Whiteleghe, Uxor Johis Fullstaffe, Uxor Robti de Chadwick, Uxor Patrick Margree de Stayley, Uxor Rodi Willison, Alice Hanson, Nanna Windebank, Elyn Wilkyn Doghter, Uxor Peryn, Uxor Henrici the Baxter, and their servants.

*The sixth form on the same side.*—Uxor Adæ de Held, Uxor Willi de Arrow-smith, Uxor Johis le Hynd, senr., Elenor le Rose, Uxor William Somayst, Uxor Willi de Bardesley, Uxor Johaness de Howarth, Uxor Henrici Spakeman, Uxor Willi de Bulkeley, Uxor Robti Jackson, Uxor Adæ Thomson, and their service.

The other void forms for Servants and Strangers.<sup>(11)</sup>

On the 16th of November, 1458, Laurentius Ashton was presented to the living by Thomas Assheton. This is most probably the first presentation of the living by the Lords of the Manor of Ashton; and since the Lord of Manchester transferred the advowson of the Church to Sir John Assheton, his descendants

(11.) See *Hist. of Ashton*, James Butterworth, pp. 151—154, ed. 1823.

have retained the patronage, with few exceptions, until the present day.

St. Michael's is a Gothic structure, but the present building, as we shall see, owing to numerous alterations, is very unlike the edifice erected in the reign of Henry V., during the lifetime of Sir John Assheton and the rectorship of John Huntingdon. When the present edifice was built we cannot state with certainty; but whenever it was built, the steeple must either have been erected, or have undergone repair or alteration, at a subsequent date, and in the time of Sir Thomas Assheton, for upon the north side were the arms of Ashton impaling Stayley. "There is a tradition," says Roby, "that, while the workmen were one day amusing themselves at cards, a female unexpectedly presented herself. She asked them to turn up the ace, promising, in case of compliance, that she would build several yards of the steeple, upon which they fortunately turned up the ace of spades. This tale," he continues, "may owe its origin to the following circumstances: Upon the marriage of Sir Thomas Assheton with the daughter of Ralph Stayley, a considerable accumulation of property was the consequence. This might have induced him to repair the church and to perform several acts of charity and beneficence. Whilst the work was going on, Lady Elizabeth Assheton, it is not improbable, surprised the builders at their pastime, and, giving a broad hint that a part of her money was employed in the erection, might desire that her arms should be fixed in the steeple impaled with those of her husband. The shape of an escutcheon having a considerable resemblance to a spade-ace, in all likelihood was the origin of the fable."<sup>(12)</sup>

In the eighth year of the reign of Henry VIII., 1516, Thomas Assheton died, seized of the "Manor of Ashton and the advowson of the Church."

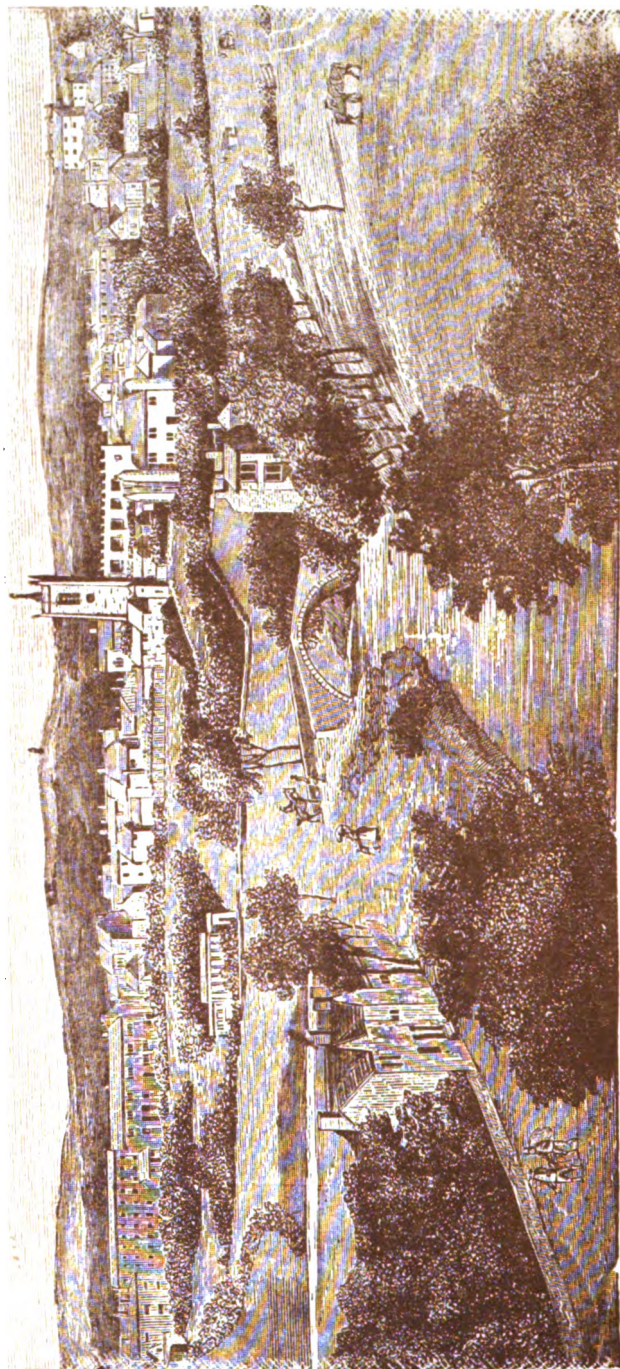
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(12.) *Traditions of Lanc.*, Roby, vol. i., p. 199, ed. 1841.









ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE IN THE LATTER PART OF THE 18TH CENTURY.







FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE BEGINNING OF THE  
19TH CENTURY.

John Bradford the Martyr—William Thomson—His Will—Robert Parker, M.A.—The Parish Register—Rate imposed by George Lloyd—Henry Fairfax—Civil War—John Harrison—Bartholomew's Day—Presbyterian Classis—Thomas Ellison—Alt Edge made a Parish—George Booth—Alterations at Parish Church, &c.

**D**URING the Reformation the controversy between “the conflicting faiths was carried on in Manchester with great zeal.” In this district the two leading parties in the contentions of those times were Dr. Pendleton,—“a native of this county, and ‘an anomalist in the practices of religion,’ having recanted from the errors of Popery, and then recanted his recantation;”—and Mr. John Bradford, M.A.,<sup>(1)</sup> who represented the Protestants. Mr. Bradford was most untiring in his efforts to advance the Protestant cause, and preached with considerable success in many of the Lancashire towns. On the accession of Queen Mary, the “National religion gave way to Popery, yet Bradford kept firm, and preached diligently the reformed doctrine until deprived of his office by the Privy Council, and principally by the ecclesiastics who were members of it.” On more than one occasion it is believed Bradford visited Ashton before his martyrdom, and was

(1.) John Bradford, M.A., prebendary of St. Paul's, and chaplain to King Edward VI., was the son of a clergyman, and born of a respectable family in Manchester, in the early part of the reign of Henry the VIII. He received a liberal education in the free grammar-school of his native town. He first entered the army, but subsequently had chambers in the Inner Temple and studied common law. In the month of August, 1548, he removed to Cambridge, and changed his study and profession. Here he took his M.A., and was invited by Dr. Ridley to become a fellow of the Pembroke House. Mr. Bradford rapidly increased in learning and piety. He was made Prebendary of St. Paul's Cathedral, and took up his residence with Ridley in London. On the accession of Mary, Bradford remained faithful to his principles, and laboured with great earnestness in the cause of the Reformation. In 1553 he was sent to prison for preaching what was then termed “heresy;” and subsequently excommunicated, and the sentence of death was passed upon him; and he was burnt at the stake June 30th, 1555. It is said that when he came to the stake “he took up a faggot and kissed it, and removed his dress, which he delivered to his servant, and holding up his hands, exclaimed aloud, ‘Oh! England, England, repent thee of thy sins! Beware of Idolatry, beware of Antichrists, lest they deceive thee!’ His last words were, ‘Strait is the way, and narrow is the gate, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that go in there at.’” See *Hist. of Lanc.*, Baines, vol. ii., p. 243—255.

considerably successful in advancing the reformation amongst the inhabitants. But the effects of his teaching were temporarily checked by the authorities, who visited the scenes of his labours, and for a time suppressed any signs of advancement in the cause of Reform.

According to the *Liber Regis*, compiled in 1535, the living of Ashton was valued at £26 13s. 4d. That same year, on the decease of Edward Molyneux, last rector, William Thomson was presented to the rectory October 2nd, by Alexander Radclyffe and Richard Assheton, Knights, and Thurston Tyldesley, Esq., with the consent of Elizabeth Assheton, widow.

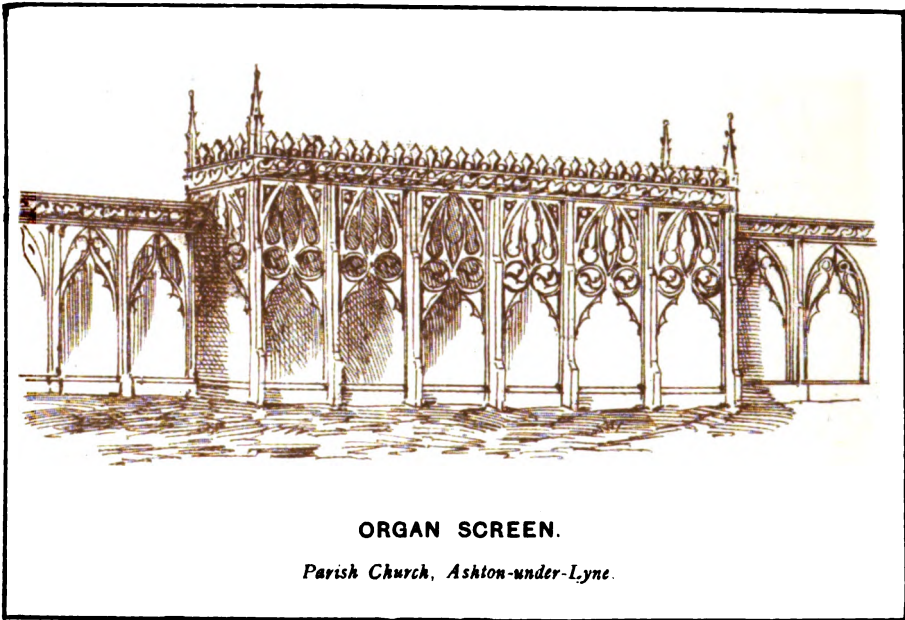
In 1553 Queen Mary reinstated a charity in Ashton, and later in that year William Thomson, rector, died. His will has been preserved. It is printed with the contractions, and capricious spelling of the original document, but as it is of peculiar local value, we modernise the orthography to make it more intelligible.<sup>(2)</sup> It runs thus :—

In the name of God, &c. The second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand five hundred and fifty-three, and in the first year of the reign of our sovereign Lady Mary, &c., I, William Thomson, clerk and parson of the Church of Ashton-under-Lyne, of good and perfect remembrance, but dreading the uncertain hour of death, make my last will and testament as hereafter following :—First, I offer my soul to Almighty God, being in perfect hope and fully trusting by the mercy of Christ's passion to be one of the elect at the day of judgment. Also I will my body to be buried in the Church of Aston [Ashton] in the high chancel, straight before the midst of the high altar. And I give to the mending of the same church and to the mending of things needful therein £3 6s. 8d., to be delivered by my executors to the church-wardens at such time as the church-wardens need and will occupy the same money. And I also give to the mending of the highway between Ashton and Manchester 20s. I give to be distributed and divided amongst the poor people of the parish of Ashton-under-Lyne £5, and it to be divided and dealt in woollen or linen cloth, or else money to the poor folks only by my executors. I give to the mending of the highway betwixt Ashton and Staveley bridge [Stalybridge] 10s. I give to James, my brother, a rial of gold for a remembrance, and a feather bed, a mattress, two coverlets, two blankets, a bolster, two pairs of sheets, two pillows, and a covering of imagery, and

(2.) Higson's Papers.

another of red say, with the two curtains, bed, and bedcellar, which bed and things aforesaid lie and are in the great-chamber wherein I lie myself; and also my conter (side) board in the hall, with a great coffer [chest] in the little parlour, and also four silver spoons, also a black-jacket of black cloth the day of burial. To my sister-in-law, his wife, a black gown with an angel of gold, and to every child that my said brother James hath 6s. 8d. To Lawrence, my brother, a rial of gold, and a feather bed lying in the great parlour, and mattress, two coverlets, two blankets, a bolster, two pairs of sheets, two pillows, a covering of red say, with the curtains and hangings, bedstocks, and bed-cellar of the same, and also my conter-board in the great parlour, with the cupboard in the said parlour, and the best coffer in the high great-chamber; and also four silver spoons, and a black jacket of fine cloth the day of my burial. To my sister-in-law, his wife, a black gown with an angel of gold, and to every child that my brother Lawrence hath 6s. 8d. To Richard Thomson, my brother, a rial of gold, and also a feather bed lying in the parlour, a mattress, a bolster, two coverlets, two blankets, two pairs of sheets, two pillows; also any covering of 'lynne and wollen yorn chekket' [i.e. check made from a linen warp and wollen weft], which I bought last; also the bedsteads, bed-cellar, and hangings of the same bed in the little parlour; and also my cupboard in the high great-chamber, and my coffer in the same chamber, wherein I used to place my sheets for my own bed; and four silver spoons, and also a black jacket of fine cloth the day of my burial. And to my sister, his wife, a black gown with an angel of gold, and to every child that my said brother hath 6s. 8d. To my sister Genet 40s. and a black gown, and to my brother-in-law, her husband, a black jacket and a rial of gold. To my sister Katharin, the wife of Peter Standishe 20s., and my little feather bed in the closet, a mattress, two coverlets, two blankets, two pairs of sheets, a bolster, two pillows, a covering of red say, with the bedsteads, curtains, and hangings of the same, and also the greatest pan that I have but one; also my best cloak but one, and two silver spoons, the one of them to be the spoon which my father gave me, and also a black gown of cloth the day of my burial; and to Peter Standishe, her husband, a black jacket with a rial of gold. To Mr. Thomas Houghton a rial of gold. To Mr. Edmund Hopwood a rial of gold. To Mistress Hopwood, his wife, a rial of gold and two silver spoons. Also I give my uncle Henry Bastwell 20s. and a black jacket the day of my burial. To my cousin Adam Rigbie 20s. and a black jacket the day of my burial. To my cousin Richard Thomson, the son of Lawrence Thomson, £6 13s. 4d. and a black jacket if he be at my burial. To John Cocke, my servant, 20s., my best wollen doublet, and a black jacket the day of my burial. To Sethe Aspyngalgh [now Aspinall], my servant, £4 in money and a black cow, and a black jacket the day of my burial if he dwell with me at the time of my death. To Johan [Joan], my servant, 20s. and three yards of flaxen cloth, if she dwell with me &c. To

Elizabeth Harrope 40s. towards her marriage, and a cow, if she dwell with &c. To Annes Cutteler 20s., if she dwell, &c. To William Knight, my godson, 20s. to get him a master, if he dwell, &c. Also I give Richard Coke, my godson, 20s. and a heifer or a twenter [two-winter; i.e. a two year old]. To Sir Ellis Ashworthe an old rial of gold. To every one of my godchildren my blessing and 8s. To Nicholas Leghes, my proctor, a rial. To Harry Marland a rial of gold. To Sir [a clerical title] Peter Bower, my schoolmaster at



**ORGAN SCREEN.**

*Parish Church, Ashton-under-Lyne.*

Standishe, 40s. and one of my jackets and a doublet. To Agnes Cutteler a cow or a heifer, if she dwell, &c. To Richard Bastwell and Thomas Bastwell, my cousins, either of them 13s. 4d. To Edward Harrope and his wife either of them a rial of gold. To James Harrope an angel of gold. Also it is my will that [for] the day of my burial so much white cloth be bought to make 13 white gowns, and those to be given to 13 poor men to bring my body to the church, and to pray for my soul about the hearse the day of my burial; and linen cloth to make 23 sheets, and these to be given to 23 poor folk to pray for my soul. The residue of my goods after that I am brought forth, my bequests given, and my debts paid, I will, shall be divided in two parts; one half to be divided amongst my brethren James, Lawrence, and Richard Thomson, and other my poor kinsfolk, and the other half I will shall be given to the poorest people to pray for my soul and all Christian souls. Also I make James Lawrence, and Richard Thomson, my brethren, my executors. Also

I make Thomas Ashton, of Shepley, gent., and Nicholas Leghes, supervisors, these bearing record Sr. Edward Hepp, Sr. Ellis Ashworthe, priests, with others.

In 1554 William Rogerson was instituted rector of Ashton on the 20th of August, on the presentation of Thomas Stanley, knt., son of Edward, Earl of Derby. This divine only held the living for a short period, and in 1557, on the 12th of June, Hugo or Hugh Griffiths, D.D., was presented by Philip and Mary. From 1581 to 1604, it is supposed that Robert Brabener was the rector of St. Michael's, since a Robert Brabener or Brabinur, clerk, was witness to the will of Robert Leze, of the parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, husbandman. It is dated March 15th, 1581. The only other record of this person we have met with occurs at Chester, where "in 1604, was proved the will of Robert Brabener p'son of the Church of Ashton-under-Lyne."

In the year 43 of Elizabeth [1601-2] Ashton paid iijs. to the married soldiers' lay, and subsequently Ashton was assessed at liiij s. od.

In 1608 the name of Robert Parker, M.A., occurs as the rector of the parish of Ashton-under-Lyne. We are assured by the present rector, the Rev. Thomas Eagar, that the first name in the register is Robert Brabener, and not Robert Parker, as has been alleged. "The parish register was commenced in 1594. In the first year are recorded 90 baptisms, and 21 marriages. The register of deaths did not commence till 1596. The first entry is the interment of Thomas, son of Lawrence Andrew, and the number of deaths that year were ten."

The following extracts from the Parish register are sufficiently interesting to warrant their insertion :--

"Raphe Schofield, excommunicated, laid in the yard by some of his friends, was buried February 1646-7.

"Raphe, sone and heire-apparent of John Asheton, of Heyroad, gentleman, was baptised 4th October, 1618.

"Thomas Haslegreave, de Hartsheade, Mylner, and dyer at Portwood Milne, was buried March 29th, 1630." It appears by the assessment of 1618, that

Thomas Haslegreave held 16 acres of land, and 1 $\frac{1}{4}$  more in common, in the Hartshead Division of the parish of Ashton.

"Robert Constantine, Clerke, rector of the Church of Oldham, and Frances, daughter of Robert Assheton, of Shepley, were married at Ashton Parish Church, January 5th, 1657-8.

"John Rawlinson, Clerke, Pastor of Bakewell, County Derbyshire, and Rachael Barnett, daughter of Humphrey Barnett, Clerke, late pastor of Oldham, had their purposes of marriage declared on the 17th, 24th, and 31st August, 1656." This extract is taken from the very interesting register of marriages during the Commonwealth Era, which was once supposed to be lost.

"Elisha Knott, killed at a coale-pit at Ffairebotham, was buried at Ashton-under-Lyne, February 21, 1673-4." This seems to be the oldest known allusion to the collieries and coal mining of the neighbourhood.<sup>(3)</sup>

From these registers we learn that Robert Parker, M.A., died in 1618, and that one Edmund Schofield was curate. "In the early periods of our history," says Baines, "it was more the practice than it has been in modern times, to impose exclusive taxes upon the clergy, to alleviate the burdens of their secular fellow-subjects; and hence we find in the year 1608, a rate imposed by George (Lloyd) Bishop of Chester, upon his clergy in the counties of Lancaster and Chester, of which impost the following is a copy," in so far as it relates to the *Manchester Decanatus in Com. Lancastriæ*. Among other names we find that of Robert Parker. It runs thus :—

A Rayte imposed by me, George Bushoppe of Chestr. vpon the clergie within the Countye of Chesshyre and Lanshyre within the Dyoces of Chestr, By vertue of lres from the lordes grace of Yorke grounded vpon + and from the lordes and otheres of his mates most honorable pryve counsell for the fyndinge of horses Armes and other furniture, the xxviiiith of October, 1608."

*Manchester Decanatus in Com. Lancastriæ.*

Mr. Langley p'son of Prestwitche	} a light horse furnished
Mr. Watmoughe p'son of Burye	
Mr. Ashton p'son of Middleton	} a petronill furnished
Mr. P'Ker p'son of Ashton Vnderlyne	

Mr. Shawe p'son of Radcliffe & } a musket  
 Mr. Whitle Vicar of Hayles } furnished

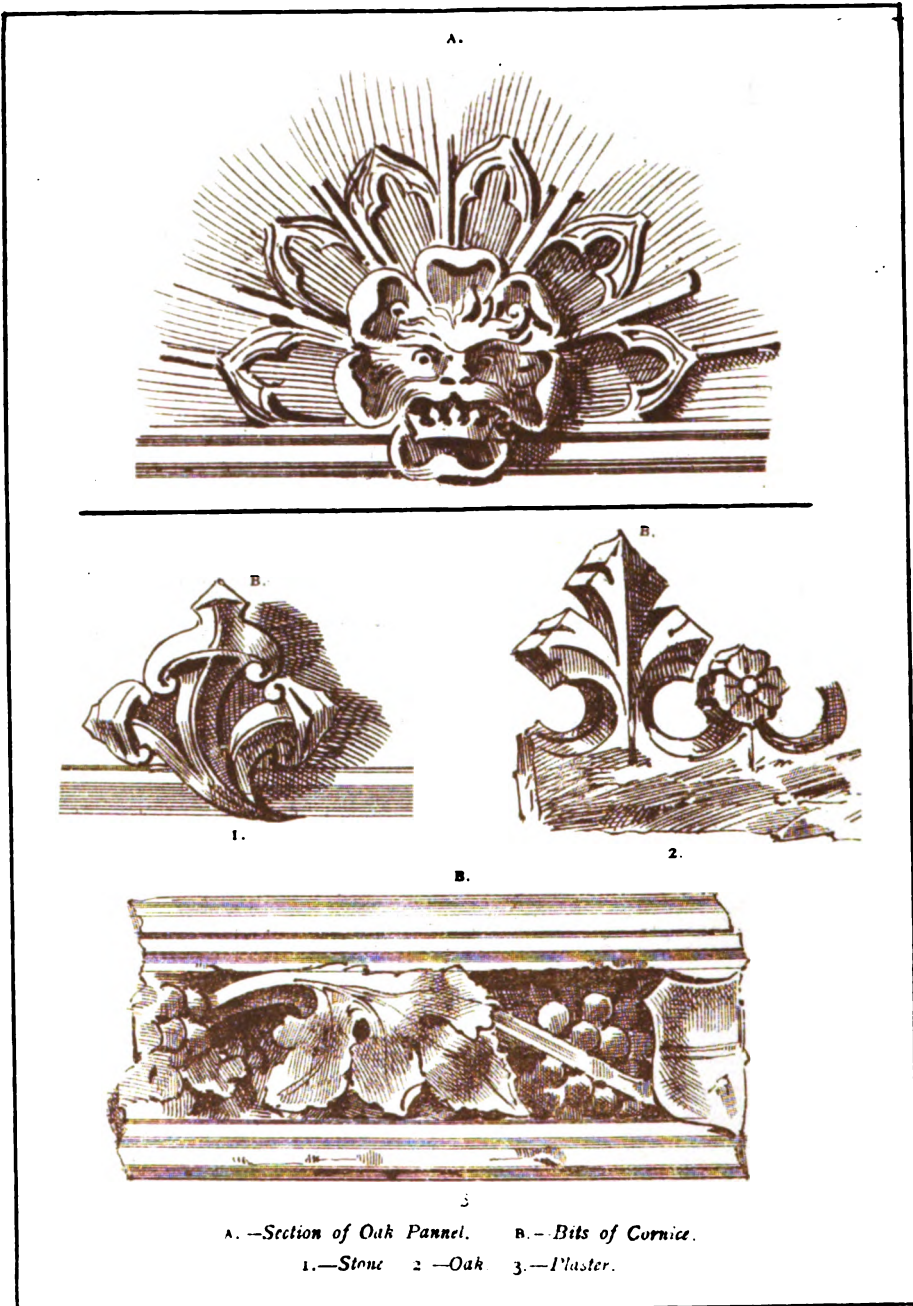
Mr. Warden & fellowes of Manchestr } a petronill  
 College.<sup>(4)</sup> } furnished

In 1619 Henry Fairfax succeeded Robert Parker as rector of Ashton. He was the son of Lord Cameron, and was the younger brother of Ferdinand Lord Fairfax, and was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, his tutor being Dr. Duckett, fellow of the college at the same time with Mr. George Herbert, orator of the university, with whom Fairfax was familiarly acquainted. Their dispositions were much alike, "both exemplary for learning and piety." Entering into holy orders he accepted the small living of Newton Kyme, whereof his father was patron, which he resigned for Ashton in Lancashire, at the desire of George Booth; and having married Mary Cholmeley, lived at Ashton and at Newton. He is described by Herbert in the "country parson" as "a regular, sober, religious, and loyal man."<sup>(5)</sup> When the civil war broke out, being driven from the rectory, he fled to Bolton Percy, near York, that living being vacant by the death of Dr. Stanhope. Here his wife died January 1st, 1649, age 56, and was buried in the church. In 1660 he removed to his own house at Oglethorpe, and there spent the remainder of his life. His recreation consisted chiefly in the study of archæology and heraldry. He died October 1665, and was interred at Bolton Percy. He left four children. "There is," says Higson, "a letter beautifully worded from Mary, wife of Henry Fairfax, to him, when absent in London, *Dated Ashton February 2nd, 1631*, wherein she mentions her three boys." On the 20th of March, 1641, Henry Fairfax mentions to Lord Fairfax in a letter certain propositions lately made at a public meeting at Manchester, "in favour of the establishment of a university in Manchester for the education of the youth of the northern parts of England." The document, a petition to Parliament, sets forth—

(4.) Harl. MSS., cited by Baines, *Hist. of Lanc.*, vol. ii., p. 120.

(5.) *Hist. of Ashton*, Butterworth's, p. 76, ed. 1823.





1st. The great distance from Oxford and Cambridge—200 miles to some, and to few under 100. 2nd. The charges of the other universities. 3rd. The desire of learned ministers to discourage the Papists. 4th. The intention of certain gentlemen to exhibit Scholarships, &c. 5th. The honour that may come to the North, to recompense it for its eclipse from the Court and universities. 6th. Manchester is a fit place for the foundation of a university, it being almost the centre of these northern parts, a town of great antiquity, formerly a city and a sanctuary, and one of great fame in respect of traffic, provision, food, fuel and buildings. Besides there is already a college, large and ancient, included for this purpose by the munificence of the Right Hon. James Lord Strange, a noble encourager of this great work. Manchester was opposed by York.<sup>(6)</sup>

Before the flight of Henry Fairfax, one Ralph Marsden was appointed curate, probably in 1640. Oliver Heywood says of him, "he was a godly, orthodox; and zealous minister, yet was much opposed at Coley, in Yorkshire, and was, by that opposition, driven out, and settled as curate at Ashton-under-Lyne, and suffered many afflictions towards the close of his days. He had four sons in the ministry, viz., Samuel, Jeremiah, Gamaliel, and Josiah. His daughter Esther married Mr. Murcot, a famous Cheshire and Irish minister. Mr. Marsden died June 30th, 1648. Three of his sons were Nonconformists, and their names are to be found in Calamy's list."<sup>(7)</sup>

There used to be in custody of the churchwardens of the Parish Church, Ashton-under-Lyne, an interesting old MS. volume, composed of coarse foolscap paper, and destitute of backs or covers. It contained some early official accounts of the wardens' expenditure, beginning with the Commonwealth era. The first entry was to this effect:— "The accounts of the Churchwardens of Ashton-under-Lyne, for the yeare past, taken 7th April, 1640, before Ralph Marsden, clarke [and curate of the Parish Church], in the absence of Henrie Fairfax [written ffairfax] Recor [rector] of the Church of Asheton aforesaid, and divers of the parishioners." The income included an amount "Received of this church lay, £3 14s. 3d.; received of the churchwardens for the year ending

(6.) MS. by Rev. R. B. Aspland, M.A., cited by John Higson.

(7.) Hunter's "Life of Oliver Heywood," pp. 80, 81.

[prior to] our year, 14s. 2d.; burials in the church [levy on], two at 6s. 8d., and two at 3s. 4d. each, £1 os. od., total £5 8s. 5d." The expenditure included, "Paid Peter Starkie for a booke for the ffast, 1s.; towards maimed soldiers, 4s. 4d.; for conveying the great bell rope to the roper's to be peeced, and then setting of it, 4d.; towards relief of poor persons in the gaole, 17s. 4d." The following year, 1651, Henry Fairfax, rector, occupied the chair personally. The income included 10s. 9d. "Received of Abell Oldham three peuter flaggons that weighed 11lbs." This was probably on an occasion of a new silver communion service being acquired by the church. One item of the expenditure is a payment to Mr. Birch, high constable, upon a precept; another, of sixpence, was "for mosse for ye steeple." This latter payment was for dry moss with which to stuff the joints and crevices in the slates from the outside, in order to prevent driving rain and snow from effecting an entrance. Among other entries, there was one, a payment for ringers for steeple music in 1689, on the memorable acquittal of the seven bishops.

Henry Fairfax was succeeded by John Harrison, who, according to James Butterworth, "was inducted minister of the Parish Church of Ashton, according to the manner of those times, by a party of soldiers; and it is further added by Mr. W. that he rifled the doctor's works and papers."<sup>(8)</sup> This person, John Harrison, is stated to have "been the son of a gentleman of good quality, near Wigan; an eminent professor of the Puritan stamp, who was much vexed in the days of the former bishops, and put to great expense in the ecclesiastical courts. He had several sons, but this (John) was the flower of his family; he was educated with great care both at school and the university. He exercised his

(8.) Edwin Butterworth states that, "John Harrison was inducted rector by a party of soldiers according to the manner of the times (1650), for a fierce spiritual warfare was raging betwixt the Episcopalians and Presbyterians. Walker asserts ('Sufferings of the Clergy') that Harrison rifled Dr. Fairfax's books and papers; but the statements of writers tinged with partisanship must be cautiously received. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners of the Commonwealth, who were by no means admirers of Episcopacy, pronounce Harrison to have been 'a painful, [pains-taking] able minister,' and state that he 'was put in by the parliament.'"—*Hist. Ashton*, ed. 1842, p. 61.

ministry for some time at Walmsley Chapel, but when Henry Fairfax quitted the living of Ashton, George Booth gave him the presentation." John Harrison was amongst the number of Episcopalian clergymen who refused to conform to the requirements of the ritual in those days. He seems to have been disposed to the Presbyterian system of government, hence, when Lancashire adopted the *humble advice of the Westminster Assembly of Divines*, he took part in the formation of the Presbyterian classis.

The Manchester classis embraced the parishes of Manchester, Prestwich, Oldham, Flixton, Eccles, and Ashton-under-Lyne. And among the names of members we find John Angier, of Denton; John Harrison, of Ashton-under-Lyne, ministers; and Robert Leech, Ashton, layman. After the restoration of Charles II. the disputation between the Conformists and Nonconformists was brought to a crisis by the Act of Uniformity, known as Bartholomew's Act. By this Act the sad alternative either of conforming to the ritual or resigning their livings was held out to those ministers who occupied the pulpits of the Established Church. Accordingly 2,000 godly ministers were ejected from their pulpits, and amongst them we find the name of John Harrison. Lord Delamere offered to put Maurice Harrison, his son, into the living, but the father thinking him unfit, used his influence on behalf of Mr. Ellison, who obtained the living. Mr. Harrison was banished from Ashton by the Oxford Act. He retired to Salford, where he suffered very much, and was subsequently deprived of the use of his limbs, but obtained benefit at Bath, and returned to Ashton, where he died in 1669, at the age of 57 years. He was interred in Ashton Church, but it is said there is no record in the register respecting his funeral. This is believed to be accidental, as "Mr. Ellison preached his funeral sermon and gave him a great character, but not beyond his desert." Mr. Harrison was buried near the altar, and his tomb, long trodden on in the aisle, was partly defaced. It is now covered up, but in making some alterations of the church a few years ago it was disclosed, and the

remains of the inscription copied. From the report of the commissioners it appears that the value of the living at that time was £113 6s. 8d. per annum, and the Parliamentary Commissioners describe Mr. Harrison as "an orthodox, painful, and able minister." During his incumbency two very important historical events occurred. First, "Alt Edge was deemed worthy of being made a parish by a commission, bearing the date of June or July 18th, 1650."<sup>(9)</sup> Second, on the authority of the parish register it is stated that "the marriage ceremony was performed [some say in the church, others at the Old Cross] by the magistrates of the district, John Guillam, Esq., of Newton, in the parish of Manchester, and Edmund Hopwood, Esq., of Oldham."

In 1662, on the ejection of Mr. John Harrison, Mr. Thomas Ellison, through the influence of Mr. Harrison, was presented to the living, which he held for about 37 years. He, also, appears to have been a Presbyterian, for we are informed that "his ordination was arranged at the 163rd meeting of the Presbyterian Classical Assembly, held August 14th, 1660. It was fixed at Flixton, of which Mr. Ellison was the minister. Mr. Leigh was to preach, Mr. Newcome to give the exhortation, Mr. Walker and Mr. Jones to pray, Mr. Constance to offer the prayer on the imposition of hands." He married in January, 1666, Esther or Hesther, daughter of Thomas Biron or Byrom, of Newton, near Manchester. He died in 1699 or 1700, and was buried at Ashton. His son Thomas Ellison, M.A., was rector of Ashton-on-Mersey, where he died in 1717, and was succeeded by his nephew, Massey Melyn, who died in 1729, aged 42.<sup>(10)</sup>

On the death of Thomas Ellison, John Simon Delaheuze, or Simon de la Howe, was presented to the living by Geo.,

(9.) These Commissioners urgently recommended a division of parishes for the purpose of rendering the clergy comparatively equal in labour as well as income. They, therefore, proposed in their report, dated July 18th, 1650, "That a Parish Church be built at Alt-Edge, distant about three miles and a half from the Parish Church of Ashton." This project was not carried into effect, and Alt-Edge still remains (1842) destitute of either chapel or church, although there has been a vast increase of population since that period.—*Hist. of Ashton*, Butterworth, ed. 1842, p. 61. See also *Parliamentary Surveys of Church Lands*, Lambeth Library, No. 912, fo. 260.

(10.) See Byron's "Remains," vol. i., p. 318, note.

Earl of Warrington. James Butterworth says concerning him, "that there is little doubt but that he was the son or relation of Mr. Isaac de la Howe, who purchased the estate of Bardsley, of Adam Holland, of Newton, yeoman. He died on the 15th of January, 1726; tradition says his death was premature." The only other notice of this person we have met with is as follows:— That on the 30th of September, 1711, he signed a certificate as "Simon Delauhauze" in his capacity as rector, to the effect that "Thomas Walker, of Mossley" (a candidate for a situation in the excise or customs) "is a man of sober conversation, and a communicant of the Church of England." His ministry is commemorated by a tablet in the church. In 1722 Arthur Holt was curate, and in 1725 James Catlow.

On the 3rd of March, 1726, John Penny, A.M., succeeded to the rectory. He died July 9th, 1758. A small marble tablet is erected to his memory near the altar. During his incumbency Edward Craddock was curate in 1747; and Jonathan Craddock, in 1758. It is stated by Edwin Butterworth that "he was locally eminent for his promotion of topographical studies." On the 9th of September, 1758, George Booth, a descendant from Booth, Lord Delamere, was presented by the "Dowager Countess of Stamford to the rectory, and was chaplain to his cousin, Lord Delamere, on whose death, June 9th, 1770, he succeeded to the dignity of a baronet. He was born March 30th, 1725, and married the daughter of Henry Turner, Esq., of Botwell, County of Middlesex, by whom he had issue two daughters." Sir George expired in 1797. While he was rector, one afternoon "in 1791, a vast accumulation of electric matter seemed to collect over the town, and between five and six o'clock in the evening the clouds burst with a tremendous explosion, which occasioned an involuntary exclamation of horror throughout the whole place. The lightning struck the steeple of the Parish Church, and melted part of the vane; a number of stones were thrown from the belfry, where an iron rod was fused by the fluid, and many of the pews at the west end of the church,

and also in the Earl of Stamford's chapel, were shivered to atoms. This necessitated a general repairing of the structure, at which time the edifice underwent considerable change."<sup>(11)</sup>

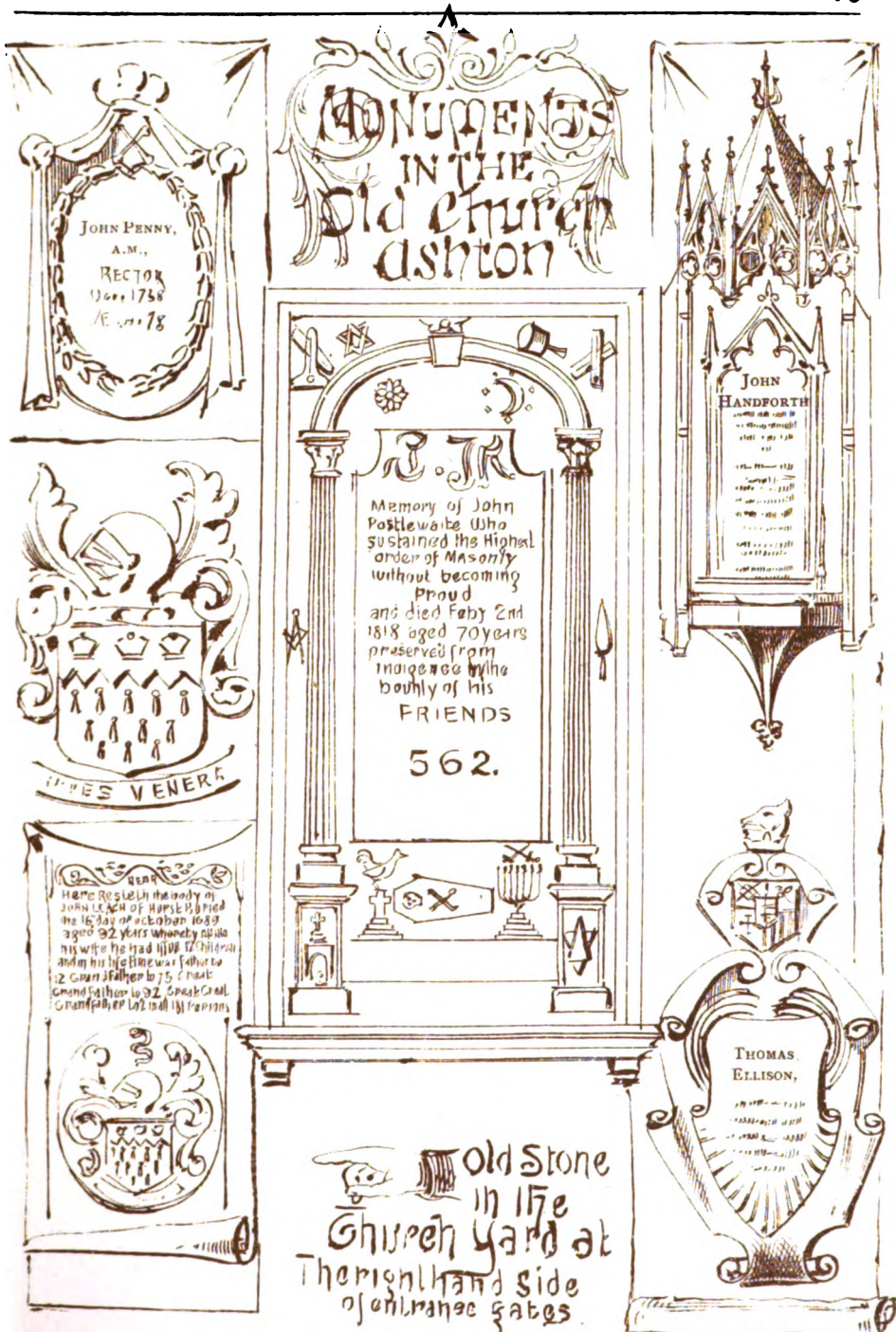
During the rectorship of Sir George we find a complete list of the curates who served under him. These were: Richard Robinson, 1760; John Hollinsworth, 1761; John Spicer, 1764; James Standen, 1768; Samuel Hall, M.A., 1770, who afterwards became curate of Manchester, 1791-4, and on the consecration of St. Peter's, in that town, September 6th, 1794, he became the first incumbent thereof, where he died September 22nd, 1813. In 1771 Samuel Hey was curate at St. Michael's; and in 1772, Miles Wrigley, who was born at New Road Lane, parish of Ashton-under-Lyne. He subsequently (1804-17) became incumbent of St. Michael's, Manchester. In 1780 Joshua Wood held the curacy, and was succeeded in 1782 by Joseph Walcam. In 1788 Thomas Newton was curate, and in 1791 Bartholomew Dacre, while in 1793 John Wadsworth held that position.

The next rector of the parish was Oswald Leicester, or Leicester, who retained the living until 1799 or 1801, when he resigned. During his short ministry the curate was John Hayes Petit, 1798.

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(11.) In 1792 the Church underwent a thorough repair. The seat-holders new pewed the bottom, and the roof was plastered and painted at the expense of the parish. At that time also the gallery was taken down, which, though the antiquary might have wished to preserve, the admirer of elegance and beauty would long before then have removed, as it destroyed the effect of the internal appearance of the place, by obstructing the view either from the east or west end.—Higson.







FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY  
TO THE PRESENT DAY.

Anchitel Grey—John Hutchinson—George Chetwode—The Absenteeism of the Rector—Restoration of the Church—John Handforth—Graveyard Closed—Burial Question—Government Inquiry, &c.

**A**FTER the resignation of Oswald Leicester, Anchitel Grey was preferred to the living, but resigned in 1810. Higson says :—" He was the third son of the fifth Earl of Stamford." He was succeeded by John Hutchinson, M.A., on the 27th of March, 1810, who resigned the rectory January 24th, 1816. Some writers have supposed that John Hutchinson was only a curate, and continued as such after his successor had taken possession of the living. But his name appears as rector in the *Episcopal Register*, with the statement that he was presented by " George Henry, Earl of Stamford and Warrington." According to James Butterworth, he resigned his charge on the 24th of January, 1816, as also appears from the register referred to above. It is most probable that he resigned to allow the nephew of the Earl of Stamford to take possession of the living, who, not being a resident in the parish, retained Mr. Hutchinson as curate in charge; for we find him, after George Chetwode had been presented to the living, for several years holding the position of curate. Hence James Butterworth places his name among the list of curates at the Parish Church, with the date of 1816 affixed to it.

When the New Church, St. Peter's, was built at the west end of the town, John Hutchinson became the first incumbent.

The Rev. George Chetwode, M.A., as we have already stated, was the next rector of Ashton-under-Lyne. He was the nephew of the sixth Earl of Stamford and Warrington. He was inducted May 16th, 1816, and was, besides rector of Ashton-under-Lyne,

“Chaplain to His Most Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence, afterwards William IV., and the Right Honourable the Earl of Kentore.” He held the rectorate for about half a century. Not long after his induction to the living of Ashton-under-Lyne he decided to take up his residence at Thame, in Oxfordshire, where he held a perpetual curacy at that Parish Church, a snug little sanctuary capable of seating about one hundred parishioners. Here the Rector of Ashton-under-Lyne lived, at Chilton House, in princely style, and though unknown in the parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, was revered in that country village for his benevolence and good works. During the half century that he retained the living of Ashton, complaints were often made that while he derived great pecuniary advantage from the living, he took little or no interest in the parish. He was seldom seen by his parishioners in Ashton-under-Lyne, and we have seen it alleged that some of his congregation had not had the privilege of seeing or hearing their pastor for more than twenty years. He was reputed to excel in “lesson reading,” and was declared to be gifted with rare eloquence, but his voice was rarely heard in the pulpit of St. Michael’s. His continued absenteeism not only caused his congregation great annoyance, but sometimes was the cause of bitter contention among the parishioners. Both on the platform and in the public papers, the continued absence of the Rector was referred to in terms of dissatisfaction, while it afforded to the Liberationists an illustration of the anomalies of the Establishment. Scandals often arose in those times from the plurality and traffic in livings.

For want of attention the Parish Church fell into a dilapidated condition, and from the year 1821 to 1840 no steps were taken to rebuild the ruined south wall or to renovate the interior. In 1840 a foundation stone of a new south wall was laid, and in course of a few years afterwards the whole fabric underwent such complete restoration that for correct architectural design, harmonious distribution of ornament, and elaborate carving in oak, there are few churches of similar size in the North of England to compare with

it. The expense of the whole of these restorations amounted to £11,310. These included an embellishment in the year 1851, which cost £1,050, and carved oak and brass-work in 1855, which cost £200.

During the absence of the rector, his place was supplied by curates, some of whom have left mementoes of the faithful discharge of their duties, and of the high appreciation in which they were held by the parishioners. On the inside of the south wall of St. Michael's Church there is a very elegant monument bearing the following inscription: "In memory of the Rev. John Handforth, who faithfully discharged the duties of curate of this parish for 23 years, and died 25th July, 1848, in the 56th year of his age. Erected by public voluntary subscriptions, A.D. 1853."

During the rectorate of the Rev. George Chetwode, the Parish Churchyard was closed as a burial ground by an order of the Privy Council, which order came in force on the 1st October, 1855. The inhabitants, who had costly sepulchres in this yard, were most deeply grieved, and hoped to be enabled to induce the Privy Council to relax the restrictions imposed upon them by their order. During that same month an application was made to the Secretary of State to allow the interment of the infant daughter of one of the Town Councillors in a vault belonging to him, situated in the Parish Church graveyard, of which the following is an outline:—

"The Rectory, Ashton-under-Lyne,

October 19th, 1855.

Sir,—Mr. —, an inhabitant of this parish, wishes to inter in his family vault in the Parish Churchyard his infant daughter. But three bodies have been interred therein—two those of infants, one that of an adult. The last interment took place nine years ago.—I am, &c.,

JOHN LIGHT.

The Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the  
Home Department."

To this application an answer in the negative was received, when the matter was placed in the hands of Mr. Henry Gartside, solicitor, who forwarded the following letter:—

" Ashton-under-Lyne, October 21, 1855.

Sir,—In reply to your letter received this morning, addressed to the Rev. John Light, respecting the interment of the infant daughter of Mr. — in the Parish Churchyard of Ashton-under-Lyne, Mr. — desires me to express his regret that permission cannot be granted him. Mr. — wishes me to urge a reconsideration of the question. There have been only three interments in the vault (which is well constructed) for the last forty-five years, the last one nine years ago. He proposes to inter the body in a lead coffin. If this permission cannot be granted him he will be compelled to purchase a new grave and make another vault in St. Peter's churchyard, which is also to be closed in 1857, as neither the churchwardens, overseers, or the Town Council have decided on providing a proper burial ground. May I again ask the favour of your consideration and reply?—I am, sir, your most obedient servant,  
H. GARTSIDE.

H. Waddington, Esq., &c.,  
Secretary of State's Office, Whitehall, London."

This elicited a reply on the 22nd instant, again expressing regret that permission for the interment cannot "be granted."

A considerable number of persons, it appears, had been busily engaged some weeks previous to the Act coming into force in converting their graves into vaults, believing that the phrase in the Act, "except in existing private vaults and graves," would enable them to inter therein; but they spent their money to no purpose, as is proved by the appended communication:—

" Council Office, Whitehall,  
23rd October, 1855.

Sir,—With reference to your letter of the 9th instant, requesting to be informed what idea ought to be attached to the words "except in existing private vaults and graves," with respect to the churchyard of Ashton-under-Lyne. I have to observe that there are *no such words in respect of that churchyard in the Order* in Council of the 18th October, 1854, directing burials to be discontinued therein from the first July last, nor in the order of the 26th of June last, extending each period to the 1st of October instant. No interment, therefore, in this churchyard can now take place without a special permission. —I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

WM. L. BATHURST.

John Ross Coulthart, Esq.,  
Church Warden, Ashton-under-Lyne."

It was necessary that something should be done immediately to provide suitable accommodation for the burial of the dead; hence, on Friday, June 9th, 1855, a meeting of the ratepayers was held in the vestry of the Parish Church, called by the Churchwardens and Overseers, in compliance with a requisition signed by a number of ratepayers of the parish, to determine whether a burial ground should be provided for this parish, under the Burials Acts, 1853, 1854. At that time the Rev. J. Light, M.A., was senior curate, who, presiding on behalf of the Rector, assured those present that the Rector would have nothing to do with the matter. Mr. J. R. Horner moved, and Mr. Stephen Andrew seconded, "That a burial ground is necessary and should be provided for the parish, in pursuance of the Act of Parliament provided." Mr. James Lord understood that if a burial ground should be provided the Rector would step in and claim the fees; and again, he objected to the parish providing a burial ground for the advantage of the borough only.—The Rev. J. G. Rogers said the parishioners declined to move in the matter, and the council must take it into their own hands.—Mr. Abel Harrison contended that the Borough of Ashton should not put the expense of the burial ground upon the parish. If it was determined that the parish should provide grounds, they ought to have two sites—one towards Mossley, and another to lie conveniently for Audenshaw.—Mr. W. Aitken moved "That this meeting do not determine whether a burial ground shall be provided for the parish until a committee shall have ascertained the existing provision for the interment of the dead within the parish, and that this meeting stands adjourned till Friday, the 6th July next, to receive the report."—The Mayor (George Heginbottom, Esq.) agreed to the appointment of a committee to report on the subject.—Mr. Oldham Whittaker, Hurst, objected to the parish being made an active party in the matter.—Mr. Aitken's amendment was then put, when there were 47 for and 51 against it. The original motion was next put, with the following result: 53 for and 36 against, thus carrying the motion by a majority of 17. A poll was then

demanding by Mr. Oldham Whittaker, the result of the vote being—for a parochial cemetery, 729; against, 1,104. It remained, therefore, for the Town Council to provide a cemetery for the borough.

For several years the council again and again considered the advisability of providing the necessary cemetery, but in consequence of party feeling being most intense at that time, the question was often shelved. In the interval, the Rector provided a plot of land for interments called the New Cemetery on Stalybridge Road. This secured the fees to the church, and in consequence of the futile efforts of some of the members of the council to obtain a borough cemetery, secured also a fair monopoly of the interments in the borough, to the great annoyance of the Roman Catholics and Dissenters, whose burial grounds were closed.

On Friday, February 2nd, 1857, John Ross Coulthart, Esq., Mayor of the Manor, and one of the Churchwardens, unexpectedly received a formal communication from the Lord President of Her Majesty's Privy Council, setting forth that the Parish Churchyard of Ashton-under-Lyne should be re-opened for burials, under specified restrictions. These restrictions were embodied in an order in Council, dated at the Court at Windsor, on the 2nd day of February, 1857, and were issued voluntarily, no application of any kind, whatsoever, having been made on the subject by any of the clergy or churchwardens of the Parish Church. It would appear that Her Majesty's Privy Council saw the impropriety of shutting up graveyards with too great stringency, and to remedy the evil sought to vary some of their former orders. Private vaults and walled graves were allowed to be re-opened, provided the coffins were deposited in layers of powdered charcoal, four inches thick, and separately entombed in black stone work, cemented in an air-tight manner. That portion of the order which relates to Ashton reads as follows:—

“That whereas, by an order in Council of the 18th of October, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-four, burials are directed to be discontinued in the churchyard in the Parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, from and after the first

of July, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five, and such time was afterwards extended to the first of October, in that year, and it seems fit that the order be varied. Now, therefore, Her Majesty, by and with the advise of the Privy Council, is pleased to order, and it is hereby ordered, that burials in the said churchyard of Ashton-under-Lyne be discontinued, except in graves never previously buried in, and except in family graves, which can be opened to the depth of of five feet and a half without exposure of remains, provided no coffin be placed within a foot of any other coffin, unless buried in a vault or walled grave, in which each coffin shall be embedded in charcoal, and separately entombed in an air-tight manner."

This order was supposed to apply to the graveyard of St. Michael's, but by an Order in Council, passed on the 20th of March, 1857, it appears that the order passed on Friday, February 2nd, 1857, was intended to apply to St. Peter's, and not the "Old Churchyard." The following order, taken from the *London Gazette*, of the 24th of March, is the new order correcting the error :—

"That whereas by an Order in Council of the second February last, varying a former order of the eighteenth of October, one thousand eight hundred fifty-four, burials were directed to be discontinued in the churchyard of the Parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, with certain exceptions therein mentioned, and such order of the second of February was intended to apply to the churchyard of St. Peter, in Ashton-under-Lyne, which was directed to be closed from and after the first of May, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-seven, by an Order in Council of the first of May, one thousand eight hundred fifty-five, and it seems fit that such last-mentioned order and the said order of the second February last be varied ; now, therefore, Her Majesty, by and with the advice of Her Privy Council, is pleased to order, and it is hereby ordered, that the words 'St. Peter's in' be inserted in the said Order in Council of the second of February last, between the words 'the churchyard of' and 'Parish of Ashton-under-Lyne,' in the fourth line of that part of such order which relates to such parish, and between the words 'the churchyard of' and the words 'Ashton-under-Lyne,' in the twelfth line of the same ; and it is hereby further ordered that the churchyard of Ashton-under-Lyne be left subject to the previous order of the eighteenth of October, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-four, and to the other extending the same."

The matter, therefore, stood as follows :—The order which applied to the Old Church was absolute and unconditional, which was to the effect "that burials be discontinued forthwith in the

Parish Church . . . and from and after July, 1855, in the graveyard." But the order which applied to St. Peter's Churchyard only partially closed it, and allowed interments to take place in private vaults and graves after May 12th, 1857, and reads thus:—"St. Peter's Churchyard. Except in existing private vaults and graves, interments are to be wholly discontinued in the said churchyard from and after 12th May, 1857."

Not unfrequently the most disgraceful scenes were enacted at the obsequies of those who were non-communicants of the Episcopalian Church. The Roman Catholics were often insulted, and the Episcopalians, magnifying their privileges of monopoly, availed themselves of every opportunity to become intolerant, which was strongly resented both by the Roman Catholics and Dissenters. The extent to which the bitter spirit had been carried, and the passion and prejudice generated by the constant friction, may be gathered from the following correspondence:—

"St. Marie's, Charlestown, Ashton-under-Lyne,  
November 18th, 1860.

Rev. Sir,—Will you be kind enough to inform me whether you have *required* that the mortal remains of Catholics, over whom the Burial Service has been read at their respective churches, should be taken into *your church*?  
—I am, rev. sir, your obedient servant, GEORGE RIGBY.

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"St. Peter's, Ashton-under-Lyne,  
November 20th, 1860.

Rev. Sir,—In reply to your note, which is dated the 18th, and has been received by me this evening, in which you desire to be informed whether I have required the mortal remains of those who are said to have been Roman Catholics to be taken into my church *before* they are placed in the adjoining ground, I have to say that I do so require it. It has been customary for parties seeking to inter their deceased friends in burial grounds connected with the Church of England to comply with the usage of that Church. I believe that Roman Catholics do this, and so far respect the feelings of their fellow Christians when they go to other churches in the neighbourhood and elsewhere. For a few months past I have suffered those usages to be infringed upon—very improperly I now conceive—in order to prevent any appearance of hostility on my part to members of the Romish Church. I frankly assure



you that I entertain no such feeling. I love those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and my earnest prayer is for their salvation. In requiring, therefore, that in future all bodies brought for interment shall be taken into the church, I wish it to be understood that I am actuated by no unkind spirit towards anyone, but I simply desire to abide by the customs or the Church.

I would observe, in conclusion, that the Church of England extends her charity to all who die in communion with the Church of Rome, and is willing to admit both their mortal remains into the Church and give them Christian burial in the ground that has been consecrated by her bishops. Will you do me the favour to inform me if the Church of Rome is disposed to extend the same amount of charity to those who die *without* her pale? In other words, will she concede to Protestants that which she claims from them for Roman Catholics?—I remain, Rev. Sir, sincerely yours,

T. W. MORRIS.

Rev. Geo. Rigby."

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"Ashton-under-Lyne, Nov. 21, 1860.

Rev. Sir,—I had scarcely time to peruse your long letter. It has not altered my opinion, much less can it overturn my experience, which is based on fact. There is no law, to my knowledge, and I have conversed with learned men of your Church, which I presume to be *Low Church*, and have been assured that you are not required to compel the parties in question to go into the church, neither are you compelled to read any service. The reasons are obvious. Thanks for your prayers whilst *living*.—Yours obediently,

GEO. RIGBY.

Rev. T. W. Morris.

P.S.—May I beg to remind you of the convict Mullins? No funeral service.  
G. R."

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"St. Peter's, Ashton-under-Lyne,

November 21, 1860.

Rev. Sir,—*Your* opinion—or experience, if you will—is no guide for me in matters relating to the Church of England, and your selection of Mullins is unfortunate, for, besides the case not being parallel, you surely would not class deceased Roman Catholics in general with a convicted murderer, who is being publicly executed for his crime.

Let me call your attention to that part of my first letter, which you have omitted to notice, where I desired you kindly to inform me if the Church of Rome is disposed with the Church of England to show offices of charity and

goodwill to those who die *out of her communion*. Will she readily grant to Protestants, where she has the power, the same privileges and favours she expects from them ?—Yours truly,

T. W. MORRIS.

Rev. Geo. Rigby."

This letter was returned with the following, written on a blank page :—

" Mr. Rigby's compliments, and he is at a loss to comprehend your logic. Every culprit has the burial service read for him previous to execution. I know other clergymen of more acute intellect than yourself have done what you refuse to grant."

About this time scenes at the interments of Catholics were frequent. In a letter to the *Ashton Reporter* the Rev. George Rigby refers to these painful quarrels in the following language :—

"You may have been informed about some of the *câses* which have occurred since your last impression was issued. I am not inclined to enter into details as to particular cases with the exception that Michael Rogers, who served on the altar, was refused Christian burial, first by the Rev. Mr. Morris, and secondly by the Rev. Mr. Parkes ; consequently the corpse was taken to the house which sheltered him when alive, and on the following day was conveyed to Oldham, where a public cemetery is provided for all, without respect to creeds.

But, gentlemen, that is not all. The person in charge of the cemetery required the certificate of death, and knowing that such a certificate was in existence, I guaranteed that it should be sent. I imagined that no difficulty could arise in that matter, but all natural and Christian speculations are vain. The gates of the graveyard were closed on the Sabbath Day at the time appointed for interment. The register of death has been delivered to the proper person authorised to receive it ; and an application is made for the certificate, and the answer to the application is, that it cannot be delivered up except on payment of fees."

The Nonconformists and Catholics alike became very vigilant, and had not long to wait before they obtained a case of what was then known as "a most flagrant abuse of the Orders in Council." The sequel was most unpleasant, and would appear most mortifying to the Church party.

At the usual monthly meeting of the Ashton Town Council, held on Wednesday, 10th April, 1861, it was reported that "the

following letter, received from Sir G. C. Lewis, having come into the hands of the committee [sub-committee appointed from the General Purposes Committee, and known as the Cemetery Committee, at that time consisting of Aldermen Heginbottom, Hugh Mason, and Galt], it was resolved "that the same be entered upon the minutes, and that the sub-committee for cemetery purposes be requested to investigate the allegations contained therein, and that the receipt of the letter be acknowledged, with the intimation that the alleged irregularities shall be investigated and reported upon:—

" Ashton-under-Lyne, 12th March, 1861.

Honourable Sir,—As an inhabitant of the borough of Ashton-under-Lyne, I feel interested in seeing that the Orders in Council, with respect to the burial grounds, are duly carried out. This, I regret to say, is not the case with regard to the 'new Cemetery.' Contrary to the Order, there are several bodies interred in one grave, and in some instances within twenty inches of the surface; and with regard to the Parish Church Burial Ground, when the late Mr. Thomas Moss was interred, a few weeks ago, deceased had neither grave nor vault, and was buried within a foot and a half of the surface.—Hoping an investigation may take place into the above facts, I am, sir,

(Signed)

THOMAS NEWTON.

To the Right Hon. Sir J. C. Lewis, &c."

" Whitehall, London, 14th March, 1861.

Sir,—I am directed by Secretary Sir George Lewis to transmit to you herewith a copy of a letter from Mr. Thomas Newton, of Ashton-under-Lyne, representing that the regulations with regard to interments in the 'new Cemetery' are not carried out; and I am requested that you will lay the same before the Ashton-under-Lyne Burial Board, and favour Sir George Lewis with their report and observations.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

(Signed)

T. CLIVE.

The Chairman of the Burial Board,  
Ashton-under-Lyne."

It was also "resolved that the Clerk write to the Rev. Thomas Parkes, on behalf of this committee, requesting to be informed if the allegations contained in the letter were true."

On Wednesday evening, May 7th, 1861, the quarterly meeting of the Ashton Town Council was held, the Mayor (B. M. Kenworthy, Esq.) presiding, when it was further reported by the Cemetery Committee that they had held a meeting on the 12th of April; Thomas Newton being present by invitation. A copy of the letter addressed to Sir George Lewis, dated March 12th, 1861, on the subject of interments in the "new Cemetery," Stalybridge-road, and the Parish Church burial ground, was read. Newton disclaimed the authorship of the letter attributed to him; and the Committee thought it desirable that Mr. Philip Holland (Government inspector) should investigate the matter in question, believing that the Order in Council had been knowingly violated. Alderman Galt moved, and Alderman Metcalf seconded, the confirmation of the minutes. Alderman George Heginbottom took exception to the minutes, not for the purpose of raising a discussion, but to protest against a portion of the minutes that had reference to certain allegations said to be made respecting the mode of interments at the churchyard. He also took exception to the minutes then placed before the Council for confirmation. "They would bear in mind," he said, "that these minutes, upon which considerable action had been taken, had never been endorsed by the [General Purposes] Committee." The calling in of Mr. Holland to investigate the matter "ought to have been confirmed by that Council, authorising the General Purposes Committee or sub-committee to take such action as had been taken."

The monopoly of interments in the borough which the parochial authorities had then enjoyed dated backward seven years, when an Order in Council was made closing the burial places belonging to Dissenters, and strictly defining the conditions under which interments should take place in the parochial churchyards on and after July 1st, 1855.

We have already stated the exact words of the order relating in part to the Parish Churchyard and to St. Peter's, and it is now necessary to quote the words relating to the "new Cemetery," which are:—"One body only to be buried in each grave in the

new Cemetery, and no burials to take place without a covering of earth four and a half feet in depth at least, measuring from the upper surface of the coffin." Again, by an order of the 13th November, 1858, the Incumbent and Churchwardens of the parish of Ashton-under-Lyne were required to adopt the following measures in respect to the parochial Cemetery, viz., "that the said Cemetery be effectually drained, so that water may not accumulate in any grave."

On Monday, the 6th of May, 1861, Mr. Holland, appointed by the Home Secretary, opened an inquiry in the council room of the Town Hall. In opening the proceedings, he said "his instructions were to make inquiries respecting the violation of the Order in Council in the borough of Ashton. Sir George Lewis expected that he would be put in full possession of all particulars with reference to the subject." After some discussion upon the right of the sub-committee of the General Purposes Committee to interfere, the Rev. T. Radley protested against the action of the sub-committee on behalf of his party, and the inquiry was allowed to proceed. Alderman Mason began by reading the following charges respecting

#### THE CEMETERY IN STALYBRIDGE ROAD:

1st. "In many cases four coffins have been put into one grave during the past twelve months, in violation of the Order of the Privy Council, which restricts the number to one in a grave."

2nd. "The topmost coffin is not more than 2ft. 6in. or 2ft. 8in. from the surface; or, allowing 6in. for the loose soil which has been spread over the graves since they were filled, the distance will be 3ft. or 3ft. 2in., the Order of the Privy Council requiring not less than 4ft. 6in."

3rd. "The coffins have been placed in actual contact, or with not more than an inch of soil between them."

4th. "By order dated 13th November, 1858, the incumbents or churchwardens were ordered to drain effectually the said cemetery so that water may not accumulate in any grave. The said order has been entirely neglected."

5th. "Water has been frequently lifted out of the graves just previous to interment. After interments the coffins have been seen floating."

6th. "Graves have been kept opened for many days, until four or five coffins have been placed therein, and only filled up when the last coffin had been deposited; the only covering in the interval has been a few temporary boards."

THE OLD CHURCH YARD.

7th. "In January of the present year (1861) Thomas Moss was buried; a common grave was opened; a coffin belonging to another family taken out in the darkness of the night and put elsewhere; the grave was then walled round with bricks; the covering of the bricks is only 15in. from the surface; the coffin within 12in. of the covering stone; Thomas Moss had no right to be buried there at all; the license of the Secretary of State was not obtained, in culpable contravention of the regulations in such cases provided."

These charges were well sustained throughout, and an attempt was made to shift the blame from those who were really responsible, by asserting, 1st. That the clergy and churchwardens knew nothing about the Orders in Council, the late sexton having kept them in his pocket; and 2nd. By trying to extenuate the circumstances under which the alleged violations had occurred, by pleading that the bodies were only those of paupers.

The evidence taken by P. H. Holland, Esq., during his investigation of the charges brought against the parochial authorities prompted the Home Secretary to insist upon the Orders in Council being fully carried out, as appears from the subjoined letters:—

"Whitehall, 25 May, 1861.

Gentlemen,—I am directed by the Secretary, Sir George Lewis, to inform you that his attention has been called to the bad condition of the newly-made cemetery in Stalybridge Road, Ashton-under-Lyne, and to point out to you the necessity of your carrying out the order of Her Majesty in Council of the 13th November, 1858, which directs the draining of the above burial ground.—I am, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

To the Churchwardens, Ashton-under-Lyne."

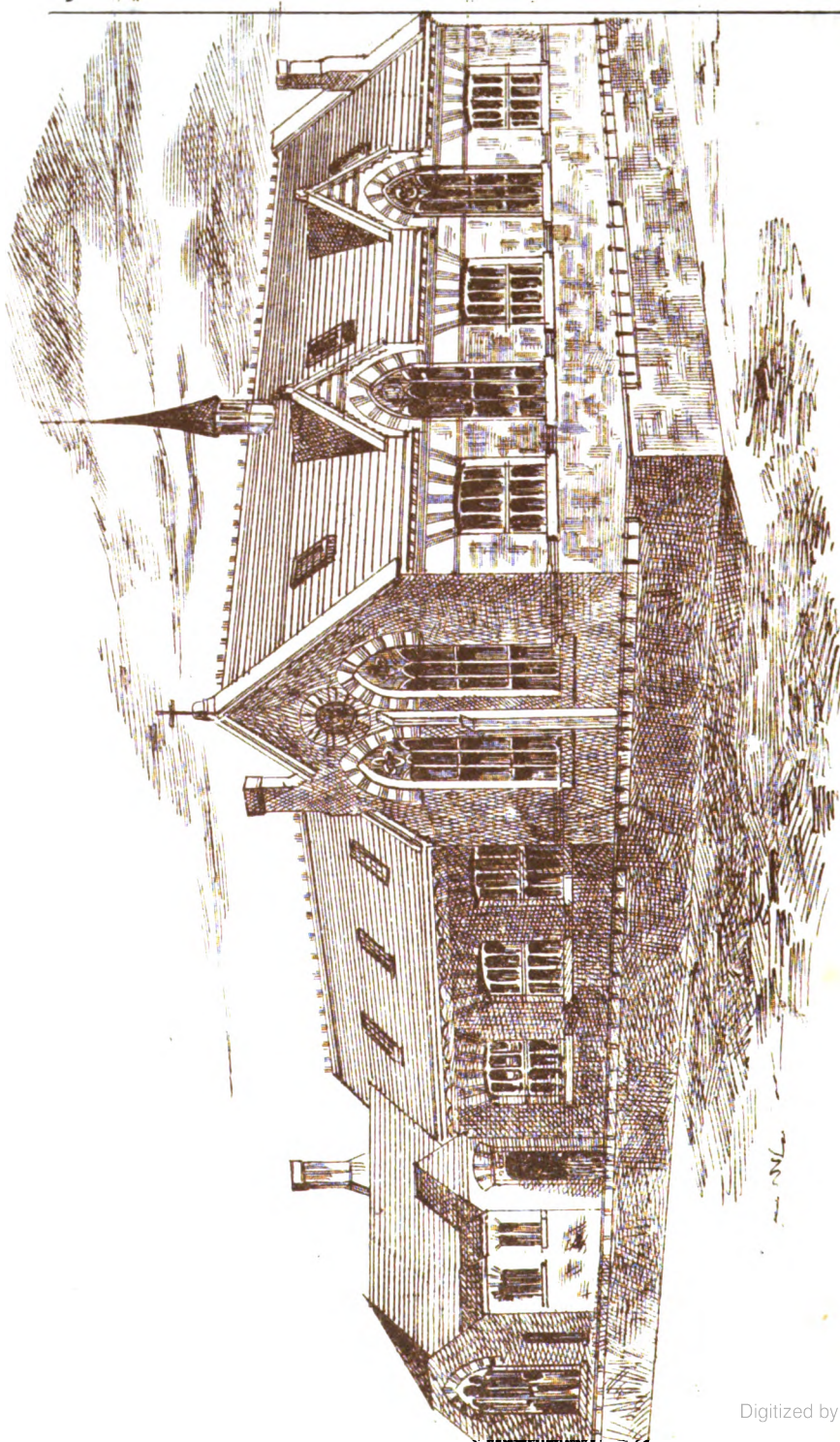
J. CLIVE.

"Whitehall, 25 May, 1861.

Sir,—I am directed by Secretary Sir George Lewis to inform you that his attention has been called to the condition of the burial grounds in the borough of Ashton-under-Lyne, and am to suggest that the Town Council should ascertain from time to time whether the Orders in Council are duly observed in the respective burial grounds.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

The Town Clerk, Ashton-under-Lyne."

J. CLIVE.



PARISH CHURCH SCHOOLS,  
*Ashton-under-Lyne.*

During the rectorate of Rev. George Chetwode, one of the most active and respected curates of the Parish Church was the Rev. John Light, M.A. This gentleman, soon after his settlement in Ashton, made a reputation among the inhabitants by his devotion, his earnest preaching, and by his eloquent addresses on the public platform. Among many worthy objects accomplished by him for the good of his parishioners may be mentioned the completion of the renovation of the Parish Church and the establishment of new schools. Although the renovation of the church was begun in Mr. Handforth's days, it was not decorated and beautified in a manner becoming the sacred edifice. Mr. Light, however, with characteristic energy, at once commenced a subscription list, which enabled him to raise funds in order to complete the edifice, and it was, when finished, one of the most noble specimens of church architecture, and the admiration of all who examined it. Again, when he came to Ashton the Sunday school was held in the premises built in 1827, when the population of the town only amounted to 9,222, and it being impossible to enlarge or improve them, they remained *in statu quo*, although the population had increased to 29,791 when the census of 1851 was taken. Accordingly, Mr. Light determined to provide suitable accommodation for the increasing demands of the population among which he was called to labour. He obtained the gift of a site from Lord Stamford, and collected sufficient money to begin the work. And on Sunday, the 19th of April, 1862, the foundation stone of the new schools was laid by Geo. Mellor, Esq., J.P., Holly Bank, Lancashire. The ceremony was conducted according to the regulations of the Order of Freemasons.

The building, which stands on a plot of land bounded by Stamford, Keppell, and Queen Streets and Mossley Road, was erected by Mr. Joseph Robinson, jun., of Hyde, from the designs of Messrs. Hayley and Sons, architects, Manchester. It contains three spacious schoolrooms. Each schoolroom is provided with a classroom, and a separate porch and lavatory. The schoolrooms are lighted by spacious windows, some of which, having traceried



heads, rise above the eaves, and are finished as gabled domers, affording a cheerful light to the high pitched roof, the timbers of which are stained and varnished. Externally the structure is faced with red pressed bricks, relieved with bands and patterns of black "headers and stretchers." The sills, mullions, and tracery of the windows, together with the usual dressings, are of Saddleworth stone. The roofs are covered with Welsh slate and Staffordshire tile to the ridge, above which rise a slated wooden *fêche*, or turret, with a gilded vane, standing upwards of 60 feet from the ground. Suitable playground is provided for the children, surrounded by a low fence wall and iron casting, with neat wooden gate of appropriate design. The contract of the whole was £2,425.

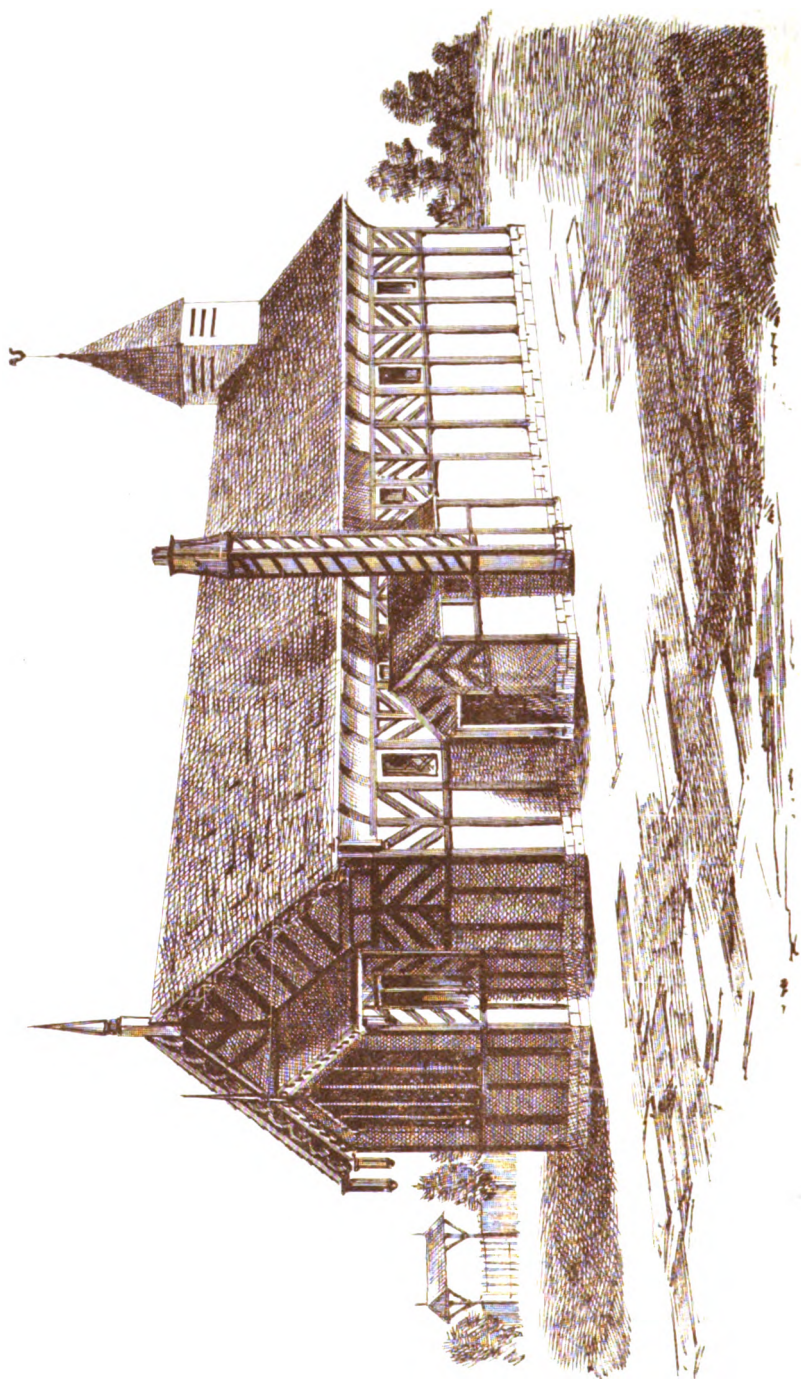
The head master of the Day School is Mr. Edwin Barlow, and the mistress of the Infant Department Miss E. S. Rigby. Under the supervision of Mr. Barlow this school, during the last ten years, has more than doubled its numbers. At the present time the number of scholars on the books is 700. Last year the school obtained a grant from the Government of over £444 os. od., and in consequence of the patient and persevering labour of Mr. Barlow, this year has passed 96 per cent. There is also a good night school held here, where science and art subjects are taught with great ability. In the examinations for the Heginbottom Scholarship this school has often taken the best positions. In religious instruction it has excelled, and has won the congratulations of the Bishop, who writes as follows :—

"Will you tell Mr. Barlow, the Head Master of your boys' school, with how much pleasure I have received the report of Mr. Scott as to its condition in religious knowledge. He says it is 'very good.' Where such work is being done I think it deserves an acknowledgment of appreciation from the Bishop.  
(Signed) J. MANCHESTER."

There is also a literary society in connection with this school, and a library containing over 500 volumes.

On Sunday evening, October 14th, 1860, the Rev. John Light, M.A., having been appointed to All Saints', Notting Hill,





DENTON OLD CHAPEL.





took leave of his congregation. The rev. gentleman delivered a most impressive address from Galatians i, 3 : " Grace be to you, and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ."

During the eleven years Mr. Light had been senior curate at the Parish Church he had succeeded in gaining the esteem and love of his parishioners ; so much so, that on this Sunday evening the church was crowded in every part, and hundreds were obliged to return home disappointed, being unable to obtain admission.

On Monday evening, October 15th, 1860, he was presented with an inkstand and a copy of the Septuagint by the teachers of the Sunday School, both containing the following inscription :— " Presented to the Rev. John Light, M.A., by the teachers of the Parish Church Sunday School, Ashton-under-Lyne, October 15th, 1860, on his appointment to All Saints', Notting Hill, London, in grateful acknowledgment of his practical interest in, and general attention to, the welfare of the school." This was followed by a larger present, for on Wednesday evening, December 5th, 1860, the congregation presented the rev. gentleman with a purse containing 200 guineas and a silver salver. Dr. Lees, on rising to make the present, said :—" The manner in which Mr. Light succeeded in his undertakings must be most gratifying both to his friends and to himself. He (Mr. Lees) could bear witness to the faithful manner in which Mr. Light had discharged his duties. He left Ashton with the good-will and best wishes of the members of the congregation of the Parish Church." He then presented the testimonial, the silver salver bearing the following inscription :—" Presented by the congregation of the Parish Church to the Rev. John Light, M.A., together with a purse of 200 guineas, on his retiring from the senior curacy, in testimony of the respect and esteem entertained for him by the congregation. December 5th, 1860." Mr. Light died on Monday morning, December 15th, 1884, in the 66th year of his age.

For some time previous to the departure from Ashton, Mr. Light had been assisted by a gentleman who had also won the esteem

and confidence of the congregation, and during the time he was contemporaneous with Mr. Light, was a most noble seconder to his best efforts. This gentleman was the Rev. Thomas Parkes, M.A. He was educated at Cambridge. After a preparatory course he entered Queen's College, and in 1849 he took his B.A. degree. After leaving college, Mr. Parkes was engaged for some time at Cheltenham as a tutor. At length he entered holy orders, and was ordained to Hurst on the nomination of the Rev. J. H. Greenwood. He afterwards joined the Rev. John Light as junior curate of the Parish Church. Upon Mr. Light's appointment to Notting Hill, Mr. Parkes took his place in Ashton. He married Fanny, the youngest daughter of W. Heginbottom, Esq. He did not remain in Ashton very long after Mr. Light's removal, but received an appointment to the Rectory of Leaden Roothing, Essex. Accordingly, on Tuesday evening, August 11th, 1863, the friends of Mr. Parkes assembled at the schools to bid him farewell, on which occasion several testimonials were presented, the principal of which were, first, a handsomely-wrought purse, containing 100 sovereigns, together with a silver tea service from the congregation. The teapot bore the following inscription:—"Presented, together with 100 sovs., to the Rev. Thomas Parkes, M.A., upon his preferment to the Rectory of Leaden Roothing, Essex, by his friends and parishioners, as a memento of twelve years' parochial ministration amongst them as curate-in-charge of the Parish Church, Ashton-under-Lyne. August 11th, 1863." Second, a silver salver, from the teachers and scholars of the Parish Church Schools, which bore the following inscription:—"Presented by the teachers and scholars of the Parish Church Sunday Schools, Ashton-under-Lyne, to the Rev. Thomas Parkes, M.A., upon his preferment to the Rectory of Leaden Roothing, Essex, as a token of respect and esteem. August 11th, 1863." John Ross Coulthart, Esq., on that occasion said: "When you came to the Parish Church, in 1851, the Sunday scholars and teachers numbered 1,208; now they number 2,228, showing an increase of 1,020. The number of the week-day scholars at that

time was 230, now it is 650, showing an increase in 12 years of 420. In 1853, when you founded your free evening school for girls, you commenced with an average attendace of 65; now the average attendance is 200, showing an increase of 135." Mr. Parkes did not live long after his promotion, for his decease is recorded the year following. In the chancel of the Parish Church there is a monument erected by his widow to his memory. It is gothic in style, of the early geometric period, simple in form, but rich in carving and detail. A shafted and moulded arch with trefoil cusplings is set on a moulded and enriched corbel table, and encloses the tablet for inscription. Over the capitals of the shafts and rear jambs are formed panelled buttresses and pinnacles, between which rises a high pitched panelled and crocketed gable, terminating in a floriated cross. The materials are Caen-stone, Peterhead granite, and Sicilian marble. The inscription, which is engraved and illuminated, is as follows:—"Sacred to the memory of the Rev. Thomas Parkes, M.A., late rector of Leaden Roothing, Essex, and for eleven years curate of this parish, who died November 8th, 1864, aged 38 years." Then follows a scriptural quotation, Rev. ii. 10. His remains were interred at St. Peter's, on Tuesday, the 14th of November, 1864.

In April, 1865, the following paragraph appeared in the local papers:—

"SALE OF THE RECTORY OF ASHTON BY AUCTION.—The rectory of the Parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, embracing the patronage of the perpetual curacies of New St. George's, Stalybridge; Mossley; St. Peter's, Ashton-under-Lyne; and Hey, near Lees, is to fall under the auctioneer's hammer in June. There is a rectory house and garden, with an income of £1,112 13s. 3d. per annum, arising principally from tithes, chief rents, and a large area of glebe land. It is added that new roads have been laid out, and a considerable increase in the value of the living may soon be anticipated. The age of the present rector (Rev. George Chetwode), who has been for many years a non-resident, is 73. According to the 'Clerical Directory,' the present patron of the



living, who wishes thus to sell it, is the Earl of Stamford and Warrington."

The parties concerned in promoting this sale were careful to put forward, in the most seductive manner, the pecuniary advantages of the bargain. "The present rector" is declared to be "73," and "his income of £1,112 13s. 3d. might be easily increased, by judicious management, to about £2,000." It was a matter of speculation in those days into whose hands the rectory would fall. Some persons were inclined to think that the Puseyites would invest the necessary amount. Others thought that the admirers of Bishop Colenso might buy him the presentation; but such speculations could scarcely have emanated from serious persons. The sale was fixed to take place on Wednesday, June 14th, 1865. It appears that the "noble patron thought his right worth fifteen thousand pounds, but he found no one willing to agree with him." The highest bidder came nowhere near that sum; and as there was a poor attendance at Garraway's, and very little spirit in those who were present, the lot remained unsold.

The Rev. George Chetwode died suddenly at his residence, Chilton House, Thame, Oxfordshire, on Thursday morning, Aug. 4th, 1870. In October following the Earl of Stamford, the patron, nominated the Rev. Thomas T. Eagar, M.A. He entered holy orders in 1841, when he accepted a curacy at Hollinwood, which he held for about two years. In 1843 he was appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury to the incumbency of Audenshaw, which he held up to the time of his appointment to the rectorate of Ashton-under-Lyne. He was formally inducted on Saturday, December 24th, 1870, by the Lord Bishop of Manchester. The ceremony commenced soon after eleven o'clock in the morning. The clergymen who took part in the ceremony were the Revs. G. H. Anson, Archdeacon of Manchester; J. D. Kelly, M.A., then rural-dean and vicar of Christ Church, Ashton-under-Lyne; T. Floyd, M.A.; G. D. Grundy, M.A.; J. B. Jelly-Dudley; J. H. Delamere, B.A.; J. H. Greenwood; G. A. Jones; H. S. Byrth; W. Ogden, M.A.; T. B. Dixon; Thomas Butterworth, &c. The

formalities of the induction were, according to the ancient style, both curious and interesting. The clergymen assembled in the vestry, from which they emerged at the north side of the church, which was left without an occupant. The whole body, habited in surplices and canonical vestments, walked along the north side of the church round to the main entrance on the south side. Here the Archdeacon read aloud the mandate of Induction, which, in a few words, formally installed the rector into legal possession. The Archdeacon then, to give Mr. Eagar actual charge, placed his hand upon the handle of the door, and the Rector opened the gate, went inside the church, closed the door behind him, and tolled the bell. He then returned to the gateway, and admitted the long train of clergy and congregation, the former taking up seats in the chancel, and the latter in the nave of the church. A large congregation assembled to witness the ceremony. The Litany was sung, the Rev. T. Radley officiating at the reading-desk.

The Lord Bishop then delivered an address, in the course of which he said—

The legal act which had just been witnessed was the last of those ceremonies or legal acts by and through which a minister in the Church of England is installed or placed in possession, legally and formally, to discharge the duties and the functions of his ministry. For the attainment of legal possession there were three formal steps to be gone through. There was the presentation, which was the patron exercising his right to present to the Bishop a man whom he believed to be godly and capable of taking the oversight of that portion of Christ's dominion which is to be entrusted to his charge. And then the Bishop, upon that presentation, had to cause an induction and to see that it was legally and properly carried out. When he issued the mandate for the induction of a rector for the cure of souls in this parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, he undertook himself to come there, and personally to induct the rector into the temporalities of the benefice and to the legal right appertaining thereto. What they saw outside the church a few minutes ago was the old traditional custom by which a minister, who is presented, instituted, and inducted, took possession, in his own full ascertained rights of possession, in the church to which he was called. And he thought it suitable to his office, as Bishop of this diocese, on the occasion of the cure of souls of this important parish of Ashton-under-Lyne passing into new hands, to be present at that ceremony, and to exercise the privilege of introducing the new minister

to his people, and the worshippers to their minister ; and he hoped that this parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, under the ministry of the new Rector, would be a parish growing in grace, in Christian virtue, and in all good works.

On Saturday evening, January 28th, 1871, a valedictory tea party was held in St. Stephen's Schoolroom, Audenshaw. Ely Andrew, Esq., occupied the chair on that occasion. Several substantial presents were made to Mr. and Mrs. Eagar, of which one was a watch, bearing the following inscription :—

“ Presented by the congregation of St. Stephen's, Audenshaw, to the Rev. T. T. Eagar, M.A., vicar, on his promotion to the Rectory of Ashton-under-Lyne, in testimony of their esteem, respect, and heartfelt appreciation of his long and faithful labours in the parish of Audenshaw, 28th, Jan., 1871.”

Another testimonial consisted of a beautiful timepiece, under a glass dome, with a handsome pair of flower vases, in terra cotta, to harmonise, and inscribed as follows :—

“ Presented by the congregation of St. Stephen's Church, Audenshaw, to Mrs. Eagar, wife of the Rev. T. T. Eagar, M.A., as a token of their affectionate regard, and as some acknowledgment of the unwearied and invaluable aid rendered by her to her husband in his ministrations and labours for the welfare of his parishioners.”

Other valuable presents were also made on behalf of the teachers and scholars. The Rev. T. T. Eagar, on rising, said—

Beloved Flock and Friends,—Nearly twenty-seven years ago I came here a perfect stranger. I was perhaps looked at with jealousy and suspicion ; but in the midst of this God raised up friends who cheered me by their advice and support. I never expected to be so happy as I have been in Audenshaw. Perhaps it is not good for us to be always happy. There have been many changes since I first came here, and perhaps only one or two of the original seatholders are now alive. It is true I have occasionally had to ask the time, for this old watch of mine—which I prize because it belonged to an old warrior who fought under Nelson, has been so often repaired that the last time I took it I was told that it was nearly done—is not to be implicitly relied upon. This must have become known to some of my friends. The people of Audenshaw will live in my memory, without these reminders, as long as I live. I am not only indebted to the congregation for what they have given me, but my deepest thanks are due to them for their present to my wife. If I had removed to a greater distance, I should have felt this separation much more painful than I do now ; but I shall often see you again, and you will never miss

me at your annual tea party. May God prosper you all, temporally and spiritually.

This meeting was followed by a tea party in the Parish Church Schools on Tuesday evening, February 7th, 1871, for the purpose of welcoming the rev. gentleman to his new rectorate. J. R. Coulthart, Esq., J.P., occupied the chair, who, in opening the meeting, said—

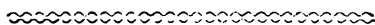
In the fifty-four years that have elapsed since the institution of the last rector, much has occurred in the parish to cause serious reflection, and to show them the changeableness of all things earthly. For instance, in 1816 the population of the parish was only 23,000. Now (1871) it was nearly 80,000. There were then only three churches in the parish, besides the mother church; now there are eleven. There were then only thirty-seven separate cotton spinning and manufacturing concerns, now there were one hundred and twenty-two, and in the interval they had also increased their dwelling-houses from 4,600 to 15,000. At the era of Mr. Chetwode's induction they had no Sunday Schools, nor any literary institution, like the Mechanics' and Church Institutes; and they were also at that time wholly without gas, waterworks, and railways. Their stately town hall, the capacious market-place, the architectural workhouse, the costly barracks, and district infirmary, were then not thought of. That they increased in morals in the same proportion as they had in material wealth, admitted of much doubt. Indeed, the statistics of crime in this district pointed in an opposite direction, and led irresistibly to the conclusion that a majority of us were becoming less moral. It was to be hoped that the Education Act, when carried out in its integrity in the parish, might have the effect of diminishing the intemperance which now unhappily existed, and of considerably improving our social and intellectual condition.

The Chairman then welcomed the new vicar to the parish, on behalf of the parishioners, who thanked them in return for the welcome they had given him that night, begging them to overlook his shortcomings, and to help him in every way in the prosecution of God's work. After addresses had been given by the Rev. J. D. Kelly (rural-dean) and other gentlemen, the meeting was brought to a close by singing the National Anthem and pronouncing the Benediction.

During the ministry of Mr. Eagar, the Parish Church has been re-decorated in a most tasteful and artistic style. The whole of the woodwork has been cleaned, and the pillars and walls have been

painted in imitation of Caen-stone. The ceiling has been painted blue and studded with gold stars. In the chancel or communion the decorative art has been beautifully displayed. In the centre panel has been painted, in brilliant colours, a representation of the Lord's Supper, finely designed, and executed in colours and gold. On the other thirteen panels are inscribed various passages of Scripture. In what is called Stamford's Chapel, the ceiling is also painted blue, with a border of *fleurs-de-lis*, and also bearing the arms of Lord and Lady Stamford. All the gas brackets, panels, &c., in the church, are painted blue and gold. The Bishop of Manchester re-opened the Church on Sunday morning, October 12th, 1873, on which occasion he took for his text Matt. xxiii. 23, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." During his discourse he said that "about £600 had been spent in decorating the church and in repairing and improving the fine organ. Of that sum about £380 had been raised by subscription, he supposed, and there was a deficiency of about £220. The Rector preached in the afternoon, and the Rev. W. A. Darby, M.A., rector of St. Luke's, Manchester, in the evening. The collections during the day realized £92 8s. 6d.

Mr. Eagar has always been one of the staunchest supporters of the Established Church, and for years has taken the keenest interest in the welfare of the town and his parishioners.



## ST. PETER'S.

St. Peter's Parish Church stands at the western extremity of the town. It was built in 1821, and cost £14,000. Of this sum the Parliamentary Commissioners granted the greater part, which is stated to be no less a sum than £12,000, the remainder of the money being contributed by the parishioners. The first stone was laid on the 24th October, 1821, by the Right Rev. George Henry Law, Lord Bishop of Chester, and the church was consecrated December 12th, 1824. The structure is a rich specimen of the decorated kind of architecture, and forms a "perfect model of lightness, combined with elegance, in the commanding Gothic style, and may justly challenge competition with some of the first structures of this kind in the kingdom." The architect was Francis Godwin, Esq., of Bedford-street, London. It is surrounded by a spacious graveyard, containing not less than 15,680 square yards, which was presented by Lord Stamford.

B—VII.

The church lends a pleasing effect to the eye as the traveller wends his way along Stamford-street in a westerly direction. The area of the church is 142 ft. by 65 ft., and the height of the tower 128 ft. It is capable of seating about 1,821 persons, there being 1,390 free seats. The church is decorated by several beautiful stained glass windows. In the eastern gable there is a remarkably fine specimen of a circular window. There are others in different parts of the church *in memoriam* of local benefactors. Beneath the south gallery is one dedicated to the memory of Mr. Earnshaw, representing the visit of the Magi to Bethlehem; and another to the memory of Mrs. Sarah Kershaw, representing Simeon in the temple, rejoicing in beholding the infant Christ. A third, representing the transfiguration, is in memory of the Rev. Thomas Parkes, formerly curate at the Parish Church. This church is also rich in mementoes of the munificence of the late George Heginbottom, Esq. In the tower are three clocks, and at the east end of the church a fourth. In the month of December, 1871, a peal of eight bells, also the gift of G. Heginbottom, Esq., was placed in the tower. These bells have won the admiration of most campanologists who have had the opportunity of ringing them. The following are the notes, weights, and sizes of the bells:—

Note.	Weight.	Diameter.	Height.
	cwt. qr. lb.	ft. in.	ft. in.
Tenor.....	19 2 0	4 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	3 4
7th .....	13 2 4	3 7	3 0
6th .....	10 2 2	3 4	2 9
5th .....	9 1 27	3 2	2 7
4th .....	8 0 9	2 11	2 5 $\frac{1}{2}$
3rd .....	6 3 24	2 9	2 4
2nd.....	6 0 4	2 7	2 3
Treble .....	5 3 8	2 6	2 2

Gross weight 80 cwt. oqr. 4lbs. The cost of the bells, exclusive of hanging, headstocks, wheels, frames, &c., was £560, and the clappers cost £10 10s. extra. The whole of the cost, with other incidental expenses, amounted to about £950 gross, but £100 was allowed for the old bell. The following inscriptions are cast on the bells:—

1st—"My gentle note shall lead the cheerful sound,  
Peace to this parish, may goodwill abound!"

- 2nd—"Our voices tell when joy our grief betide,  
Mourn with the mourner, welcome home the bride."
- 3rd—"May all the truth and harmony rejoice,  
To honour Church and Queen with heart and voice."
- 4th—"Prosperity attend Old England's shore,  
Let Ashton flourish now and evermore."
- 5th—"With loving voice I call to Church and Prayer,  
And bid the living for the grave prepare."
- 6th—"For mercies undeserved this peal is raised,  
So may Thy name, O God, through Christ be praised."
- 7th—"Grateful for all and every blessing here,  
We look on high in faith, and without fear."
- 8th—"This peal of eight bells (tenor 20 cwt.) was given to  
St. Peter's Church, Ashton, 1871, by George Hegin-  
bottom, Esq., J.P., Mayor of the Borough in the  
years 1853, 1854, and 1855, to the honour and glory  
of God."



The old bell contained the following Latin inscription :—" *Hi Surgunt illi sacent mea Movente Lingua.*" The opening peal was rung on December 28th by a set of the oldest campanologists in the borough, some of them being veterans of 75 and 78 years of age.

The first incumbent of St. Peter's Church was the Rev. John Hutchinson, who had, previous to its erection, been curate at the Parish Church. For some years prior to his death, this gentleman was unable to attend to the regular services, and at length, through age and infirmity, was compelled to resort to the expedient of residing out of the parish, leaving his curate in charge. The living is a vicarage endowed by seat rents, surplice fees, &c. The patron is the Rector of Ashton. The annual value of the living in 1833 was returned at £137. On the decease of the Rev. John Hutchinson, the Rev. John Handforth was presented to the living, but he held it for a short time only. The next incumbent was the Rev. T. W. Morris, who gained a fair amount of popularity in the parish, but was afterwards compelled to retire in consequence of misdemeanour. He was followed by the Rev. W. Ogden, in whose time the living was represented to be worth £340. By an arrangement between Mr. Ogden and the Rev. W. B. Kirk, B.A., LL.D., the latter came into possession of the incumbency. This gentleman has immortalised the church,

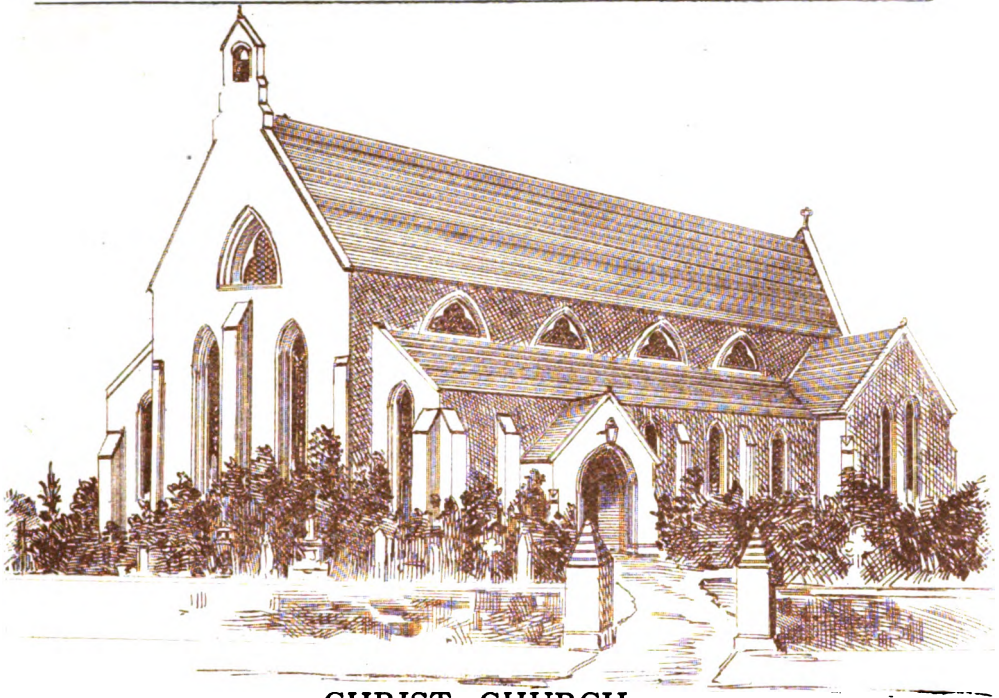


in a volume of poems on Ashton and neighbourhood. These poems, which were published in 1883, are dedicated to the Right Hon. the Countess of Stamford and Warrington, by gracious permission of her Ladyship, by the author. The preface contains the following paragraph, setting forth the intention of the author—

“ These few verses are written with the desire that all who live in these parts may be better acquainted with the very ancient and interesting history of Ashton-under-Lyne and neighbouring towns, and also that the parishioners may see how deeply I appreciate their great attachment to the church and its burial-ground.”

In connection with this church there are two large and influential day and Sunday schools, one situate in Welbeck Street, and the other in Victoria Street. The latter was built with money bequeathed by the late R. Higgins, Esq., the foundation-stone being laid by Thomas Heginbottom, Esq., on Friday, June 2nd, 1871. The day schools are conducted by Mr. J. O'Hara, under whose management a large number of children receive tuition.





CHRIST CHURCH.

This church stands on the north-west side of the town. It is a cruciform structure, and built in the early English style. It was erected in 1847, when an Ecclesiastical district was appointed to it. There are 850 sittings, 750 of which are free. The living is valued at £400 per annum, and is in the gift of the Crown and the Bishop of Manchester alternately. Connected with this church are schools, capable of accommodating 839 scholars, which were erected in 1848 at a cost of £2,000. Another large and commodious school was erected in 1870, in Gatefield, to accommodate that portion of the parish, and is well attended by children on Sundays. It is known by the name of Christ Church New School. The cost of the erection was £1,000, which sum was bequeathed by the late R. Higgins, Esq. It is capable of accommodating 562 children. The school was opened in January, 1871.

The first incumbent of Christ Church was the Rev. C. T. Quirk, who was followed by the Rev. Arthur Hulton. The latter

gentleman was born at Hulton Hall, in this county, on July 31st, 1816, and was the second son of William Hulton, Esq., of Hulton Park, by Maria, his wife, youngest daughter and co-heiress of Randal Ford, Esq., of Wrexham, by Elizabeth, daughter of Peter Brooke, Esq., of Mere, Cheshire. He was prepared for the University by a succession of tutors, including the Rev. Edward Girdlestone, then vicar of Deane, county of Lancaster, late Canon of Bristol, and the Rev. George Beecher Blomfield, Canon of Chester, brother to the late Bishop Blomfield, of London. He entered Brazenose College, Oxford, in 1834; was a Hulmian Exhibitioner in 1836, and during his whole residence at that seductive seat of learning was distinguished by his studious, moral, and frugal habits. Having finished his University course with credit to himself and satisfaction to his relatives, he took his Bachelor's degree in 1839, and was soon after admitted to holy orders, and his first curacy at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where he was much esteemed for his sauvity of manners and the zeal he displayed in the discharge of his clerical functions.

In August, 1842, he was induced to accept, through the mediation of the Rev. R. Bentley, of Manchester, the curacy of St. Peter's, Ashton, then vacant by the resignation of the Rev. T. C. Nicholson. During the period of his holding the curacy of St. Peter's, for three and a half years, he established national week-day and infant schools, 506 infants having been enrolled by him on the 7th of November, 1842, which was the day on which the infant school was opened. He also, by indomitable perseverance, increased the number of scholars and greatly improved the method of communicating information to them. His incumbent, the late Rev. John Hutchinson, being, from age and infirmity, non-resident, the whole work of the parish devolved upon Mr. Hulton, which he undertook with a pleasure, and his ministrations were highly appreciated by the parishioners. While at St. Peter's, nearly every seat was occupied. The Sunday scholars collected by him, including those at Hooley Hill, numbered about 1,600, the day scholars about 300, and the infants about 500.

The Rev. A. Hulton, in 1845, while curate of St. Peter's, married Elizabeth Margaretta Louisa, second daughter of Jonah Harrop, Esq., of Bardsley House, by whom there were issue two sons and one daughter, namely, Harrington, Montagu, and Agnes. Soon after his marriage, in March, 1846, he was presented to the perpetual curacy of Walmesley, near Bury, where he resided for nearly eight years, or until 1854, when he was presented by the Bishop of Manchester to the living of Christ Church, Ashton, then vacant by the resignation of the Rev. C. T. Quirk. Soon after his induction to Christ Church his health began to fail, though he was never incapacitated from discharging the duties belonging to his sacred calling. So anxious was he all along that nothing should be wanting on his part which his parishioners could reasonably require, that, notwithstanding his impaired health, he went manfully through two full services in his church every Sunday, and carefully superintended his week-day and Sunday schools with unswerving regularity. It may be truly said that to great firmness of purpose and rectitude of conduct, he united extreme kindness of heart and gentleness of manners, so much so, indeed, that doubts may reasonably be entertained whether he had a single enemy.

His pulpit administrations were always characterized by earnestness of manner and a never-failing supply of practical, scriptural, instruction. His doctrinal sentiments were judiciously removed from the extremes of either section of the Church of England. His reading at all times was remarkably impressive, and his sonorous voice, commanding features, and benevolent countenance told effectively on his congregation when pronouncing the National prayers, or the inspired lessons as they appear in the Book of Life. The grand leading characteristics of his nature were kindness, gentleness, and fondness. "In a word," says a friend "he was a kind parent, an indulgent husband; affable in his address, and mild in his demeanour, ever ready to oblige, breathing habitual kindness towards friends, and courtesy towards strangers. He exercised authority with moderation, administered

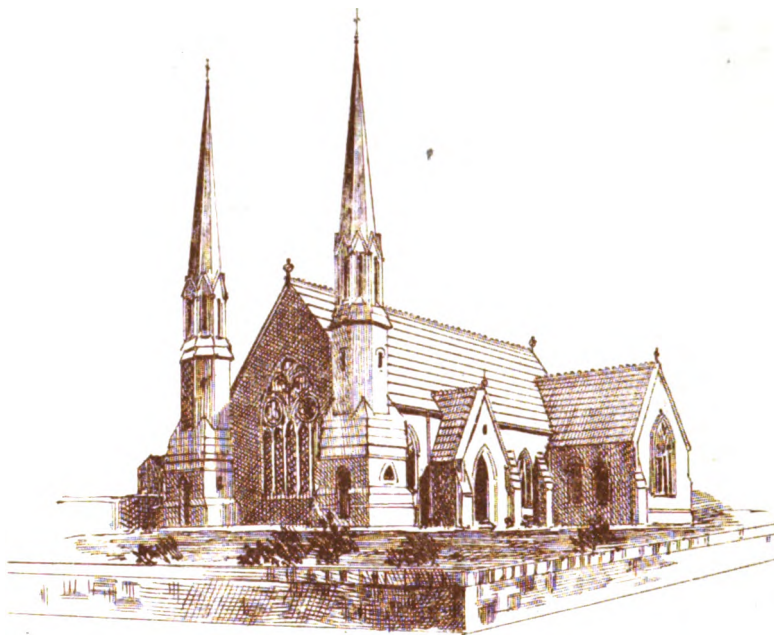
reproof with tenderness, and conferred favours with ease and modesty. He was unassuming in opinion and temperate in zeal. He avoided contentions about trifles, was slow to contradict, and slower still to blame, but prompt to allay discussion and restore peace. He never intermeddled unnecessarily with the affairs of others, nor pried inquisitively into their secrets. He was delighted to alleviate distress, and if he could not dry up the falling tears, he endeavoured, as far as in him lay, to soothe the grieving heart. He sought to please rather than to dazzle; and concealed with care his superior family connection, lest the exhibition of it should prove painful to others less favourably circumstanced." He passed away on New Year's day, 1858, by spasms of the heart, aged 41 years, one of the humblest of Christians and most exemplary of men. His remains were interred on Thursday, the 6th of January, 1858, in the family vault of his father-in-law, Jonah Harrop, Esq., at Bardsley Church, the whole distance from the deceased's residence to the church being lined by hundreds of sorrowing spectators, many of whom were his Sunday school teachers and scholars, who had come, through deep sorrow, from Ashton-under-Lyne and other places, to pay the last sad tribute of respect to one whom in life they tenderly loved, and whose death they deeply lamented.

The next incumbent was the Rev. F. H. Williams, a most popular preacher and a devout labourer in the cause of his Master. He remained at Christ Church until 1865, when he was appointed to the Deanery of Graham's Town, South Africa. At a meeting of the wardens, sidesmen, and others of Christ Church congregation on September 22nd, 1865, the following resolution was accepted—

"That the Rev. F. H. Williams, having been appointed to the Deanery of Graham's Town, South Africa, his congregation and friends consider it fitting and proper that a public testimonial be presented to him, to mark their appreciation of his character as a Pastor in the Church of England, his talent and abilities as a Biblical scholar, his spirited advocacy of Church and Conservative principles, and his successful ministrations which have been productive of such gratifying results during the seven years he has had the spiritual oversight of the parish of Christ Church."

The committee consisted of Messrs. Thomas Heginbottom, Nathan Fawley, John Knott, Charles F. Whitehead, Henry Rider, W. E. Whitehead, Dr. Lees, M.D., Dr. Vernon, Lieutenant-Col. Mellor, Councillors Moss, J. H. Brownson, G. Bolsover, J. Eaton, T. Coop, S. Bardsley, and others.


After the departure of the Rev. F. H. Williams, the Rev. James Davenport Kelly, M.A., was appointed vicar. This gentleman for nearly 20 years exercised a most powerful influence for good, not only in his parish but throughout the whole of the district. He was a most powerful preacher, an eloquent and effective speaker; and withal, most charitable in disposition. According to the "Clerical Directory" he was a scholar of Wadham College, Oxford; Hody Hebrew Exhibitioner; Kennicott Hebrew Scholar, B.A., sec. cl. Lit. Hum., 1851; M.A., 1854. He was ordained deacon in 1852 by the Bishop of Oxford, and priest in 1853 by the Bishop of Manchester. He was curate of St. John's, Blackburn, from 1853 to 1855; vice-principal of Elizabeth College, Guernsey, from 1855 to 1860; rector of St. James's, Manchester, from 1860 to 1865, when he was appointed vicar of Christ Church, Ashton-under-Lyne. In 1870 he was created rural dean of Ashton. At the Diocesan Registry, on Tuesday, 17th of June, 1884, the Bishop of Manchester formally collated and instituted him to the canonry in the Cathedral, void on the 11th of the same month by the resignation of the Ven. George Henry Greville Anson. The Bishop at the same time collated and instituted the Rev. Thomas Eagar, rector of Ashton-under-Lyne, to the honorary canonry, vacant by the death of the Rev. Thomas Rothwell Bently. The installation of the Rev. J. Davenport Kelly as one of the resident canons of Manchester took place on Monday afternoon, June 23rd, 1884. This preferment rendered the office of rural-dean of Ashton-under-Lyne vacant, also the vicarage of Christ Church. The Rev. H. J. Palmer, the present vicar, was afterwards inducted to this position on the 30th day of December, 1884.



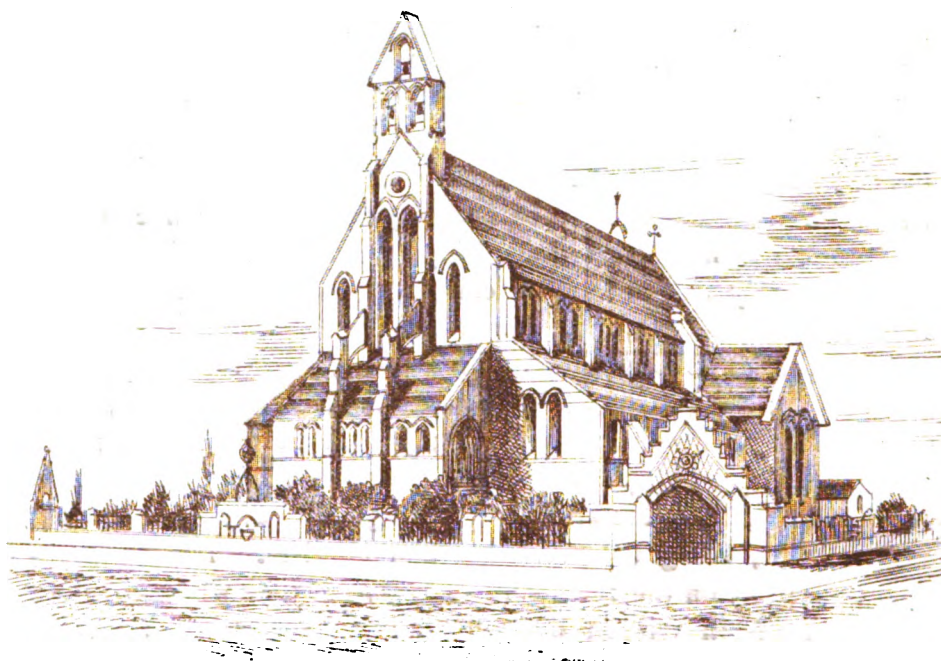
ST. JAMES'S.

This place of worship was erected at the sole cost of the late Oldham Whittaker, of Higher Hurst, at a cost of £4,800, who also endowed it with the sum of £1,000. The structure, which stands in Union-street, is built of stone, in the style of architecture now generally termed "deserated," or "middle pointed," and which prevailed during the 14th century, commencing with Edward I. and ending with Edward III. It is built in the cruciform shape, with nave, two transepts, chancel, organ room, vestry, and porch, with two campanile towers surmounted by spires, and between them a large geometric window throwing a flood of light into the body of the church. The roof is an open-timbered one, of red deal. The roof of the nave, chancel, and transepts vary in form, but are in unison with the general style of the building. The open benches are of red deal, as are the stall seats in the chancel; but the altar table,

chairs, rail, commandment niches or tablets, pulpit, prayer desk, and choir stalls are all of richly-carved oak, in open or perforated carving. The floor of the chancel is laid with Minton's encaustic tiles. The font, a very rich and handsome one, is of the same material as the Caen stone, but from the Duke of Newcastle's quarries, Nottinghamshire. The Earl of Stamford gave the land and Mrs. Whittaker the Communion plate. The edifice is calculated to seat five hundred worshippers, but on special occasions a considerably larger number can be accommodated. A great many of the seats are free. The building committee consisted of the Rev. T. B. Dixon, present incumbent; A. B. Rowley, Esq. (chairman); Reginald Whittaker, Esq.; J. R. Coulthart, Esq. (treasurer and honorary secretary); Joseph Fletcher, Esq.; and Arthur F. Payne, Esq. The building was completed on the 27th of December, 1865, Messrs. George and John Shaw, of St. Chad's, Saddleworth, being the architects and builders. The consecration took place on the 28th of December, 1865, on which occasion the Rev. Canon Gibson delivered an eloquent sermon on the advantages and obligations of public worship from the words, "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord." Psalm cxxii. 1. At the Diocesan Registry, on Tuesday, January 9th, 1866, the Bishop of Manchester, on the nomination of the trustees, duly licensed the Rev. Thomas Baker Dixon, the present vicar, to the incumbency. The register dates from 1866. The living is a vicarage, and is in the gift of the trustees. There is a large and commodious day and Sunday school in connection with this church which was erected by subscription. Amongst the principal donors were the following:—Joseph Fletcher, £100; George Heginbottom, £100; Thomas Mellor, £100; Ely Andrew, £50; James Kershaw, £25. The school was opened on the 3rd January, 1870.







### HOLY TRINITY.

During the curacy of the Rev. J. Light, M.A., a Mission was opened in a room in Katherine-street, and forming a branch of the Parish Church. In this humble place divine service was conducted, and in connection therewith day and Sunday schools were founded. For general convenience the schools were subsequently removed to the upper room of a building in Cavendish-street. Here the schools flourished, until, by degrees, the whole of the building became occupied for school purposes. The worshippers attending the Mission Room, also, became so numerous that the place was inconveniently small for their accommodation.

In October, 1872, a Conventional Parish, called Holy Trinity, was formed in the Borough of Ashton-under-Lyne out of the existing parishes of St. Michael's, St. Peter's, and Christ Church. At this time services were conducted in the Mission Room by the

Rev. J. W. Broome. In 1876, George Heginbottom, Esq., with princely liberality, undertook the entire cost of erecting a church in that parish, and a site consisting of 7,000 yards was given for that object by the Earl of Stamford and Warrington. On Saturday, September 2nd, the foundation-stone was laid by Thomas Heginbottom, Esq., nephew of the donor, when a trowel was presented to him bearing the following inscription:—

“Presented to Thomas Heginbottom, Esq., on the occasion of his laying the foundation-stone of the Church of Holy Trinity, Ashton-under-Lyne.—September 2nd, 1876.”

Mr. Herbert Heginbottom deposited a bottle, in a cavity prepared for it, containing the local newspapers, photographs of the founder and others, also a manuscript giving a detailed description of the Holy Trinity district. Mr. Heginbottom laid the stone, and finding it well and duly laid, brought down his mallet on the four corners, saying at the same time—

“In the faith of Jesus Christ we place this foundation-stone, in the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Amen.”

The prayers were intoned by the Rev. J. W. Broome, assisted by the Rev. W. Ogden; after which addresses were delivered by the Revs. Thomas Eagar, M.A., and J. Davenport Kelly, M.A. A second stone was laid the same day by the Mayor, George Mellor, Esq., who was at that time the Deputy Provincial Grand Master of Freemasons of East Lancashire, on which occasion the stone was laid with Masonic rites. He was attended by about 200 Freemasons, among whom were the members of the Craft, Royal Arch Masons, Provincial Grand Officers of East Lancashire, the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, &c. The usual formula of testing the stone was then gone through, and it was declared “perfect and trustworthy,” “well and truly found” and “true.” The Grand Master finished the work by tapping the stone with the mallet. The Mayor then poured a small quantity of corn (emblem of plenty) into the aperture at the top; afterwards, anise, (emblem of mirth); and, lastly, oil (emblem of charity). The

design of the edifice is characterised by great simplicity, while at the same time it is an unusual one. There is a broad nave, and chancel of equal width, the latter terminating towards the east in an octagonal apse, and opening by nine arches into a chevet or surrounding aisle, which, at a lower level than the chancel floor, serves as a vestry for the clergy and choristers. Above this chevet are a series of two-lighted clerestory windows, lighting the chancel. The nave is divided from the north and south aisles by arcades of stone pillars and arches. At the west end there are three arches, two opening into porches, and the central one into a baptistry, in which the teachers, scholars, and friends of Holy Trinity Schools have placed, as a record of their gratitude to the founder of the church, a stained-glass window. The upper part of the west gable is occupied by a very lofty two-light window, with a rose above it, and two shorter windows on each side. There is a good range of clerestory windows above the aisle roofs, which, with the large western window, light the nave. Inside the aisles there is a continuous brick arcade, two out of every three of the arches being pierced as windows. There are massive buttresses where required for strength, but none merely for effect or show. In the west elevation, which fronts Portland-street, besides the windows above named, there is a bold and massive gable belfry for three bells. In this, and in various other ways throughout the church, its Trinitarian dedication is referred to. Over the chancel arch outside, instead of a cross is the well-known Trinitarian symbol of the double triangle. The church is built mainly of brick with stone dressings. There are a few bands and patterns of black on the outside, and inside patterns of white brick. By this means plaster inside the edifice is obviated, and the interior roofs are boarded. The chancel is particularly spacious, and is as lofty as the nave. The church will seat between 700 and 800 people, and, when required, on festival and special occasions, 200 to 300 more can be accommodated in the polygonal chevet around the chancel. The total cost of the church is estimated to be about £10,000. The living is a vicarage of the annual value of £223, with

residence, and is in the gift of trustees. The Rev. John William Broome is the present vicar.

Through the munificence of the same donor, the late George Heginbottom, Esq., a commodious and handsome building for Day and Sunday School purposes has been erected upon land adjoining the church and vicarage, forming at once a complete and picturesque block. As before stated, the land was given by the late Earl of Stamford. The foundation stone of the school was laid on Saturday, June 28th, 1884, by Thomas Heginbottom, Esq., and was opened on Saturday, January 31st, 1885, by Ely Andrew, Esq.; and the meeting, afterwards, was presided over by Mr. Heginbottom. There is accommodation in these schools for 766 children. Through the indefatigable exertion of the head master, Mr. J. W. Clough, the school has made considerable progress.





## Ecclesiastical History—Nonconformity.

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### CHAPTER XII.

#### THE RISE OF THE NONCONFORMISTS.

Tyranny of Laud—Samuel Eaton: His Imprisonment; his flight to New England and his return; he preaches in St. John's, Chester—Dukinfield Chapel haunted—Petition of the Puritans—Eaton Chaplain to the Parliamentary forces at Chester—Samuel Taylor, &c.

THE year before the assembling of the Parliament which wrung from the reluctant King, Charles I. his assent to the Petition of Right, a movement had been set on foot among the Cheshire Puritans to establish lectures in some of the principal towns in the North of England. Laud, now a tyrant in the Church, and who held a most bitter resentment to the Puritans, instituted proceedings against the movement, and caused all the property they had acquired for that purpose to be confiscated to the King; but Laud, however vigilant, was unable to suppress the meetings of the Puritans, which were held in many places with great success. Among the earnest spirits of those times we find Samuel Eaton occupying a prominent position. He had already settled as rector at West Kirby, in Wirrall, where he denounced Episcopacy, and refused to conform to the ritual of the Established Church. His fiery, earnest spirit led him at times to extremes, and he was soon marked by Bridgeman, the Bishop of Chester.

When the bishop saw his opportunity he caused him to be suspended for his nonconformity. This occurred in the year 1631. Eaton now fled to the metropolis, where he became associated with John Lothorp, and shared with him the care of the Christian societies there. "Often interrupted by violence, they removed from place to place to avoid detection." Kiffin says: "Being then in the heat of the bishop's severities, we were forced to meet very early in the morning and continue together all night." But despite these discouraging circumstances their numbers became considerably augmented; so much so that the Bishop of Exeter wrote to Laud on the 11th June, 1631:—

"Right Reverend and Honourable, with my best services, I was hoping last week to give your lordship information of a *busy* and *ignorant schismatic* lurking in London, since which time I hear, to my grief, that there are eleven congregations (as they call them) of separatists about the city, furnished with idle pretended pastors, who meet together in new houses, and such other places of resort, every Sunday. I do well know your lordship's zeal and vigilance over that popular world of men. So far as I am assured, your lordship finds enough time to move your sorrow and holy fervour in the cause of God's church. Neither do I write this to inform your lordship of what you know not, but to condole the misery of the time. *Deus Meliora.*"<sup>(1)</sup>

Laud, ever on the alert to punish the separatists, heard of a secret meeting to be held in the night at the house of Humphrey Barnet, in Blackfriars. Accordingly, on the 9th August, 1632, he surprised them, and took twenty-four prisoners. Eaton and Lothorp were among the number. On the 2nd May the prisoners were brought up for examination. On the 8th May they were taken before the Court of High Commission at the "Consistory in St. Paule's." None of the prisoners would take the oath. Laud, in an angry tone, demanded that they should be sworn; but the prisoners remained obstinate.

Laud (turning to Lothorp) demanded: "Where are your orders?"

Lothorp: "I am a minister of the Gospel of Christ, and the Lord hath qualified me."

Laud: "Is that a sufficient answer? You must give a better answer before you and I part."

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(1.) *Congregational History*, Waddington, p. 273.

Lothorp: "I do not know that I have done anything which might cause me justly to be brought before the judgment-seat of man. And for the oath, I do not know the nature of it."

King's Advocate: "The manner of the oath is, that you shall answer to that you are accused of—for schism."

York and London: "If he will not take the oath, away with him."

Lothorp: "I dare not take the oath."<sup>(2)</sup>

Samuel Eaton was next pressed to swear, but he firmly refused, and the court ordered that they should be kept in prison. Like the apostles of olden time they sang praises in prison, and found among those with whom they associated one of the best fields for mission work. Eaton alone is charged with preaching to the convicts. It was an offence at which the governor had connived, from which it is clear that even he must have been under the influence of these men. This information was supplied to Laud in a letter written by one Francis Tucker, a Bachelor of Divinity, who was imprisoned for debt. It runs thus—

" August, 1633.

"To the most Reverend Father in God, William, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, his Grace, Primate, and Metropolitan of All England, humbly sheweth: The most humble petition of Francis Tucker, Bachelor of Divinity, and prisoner in Newgate for debt.

"That whereas there is one Samuel Eaton, prisoner in Newgate, committed by your grace for a schismatical and dangerous fellow; that the said Eaton hath held divers conventicles within the said gaol, some whereof hath been to the number of seventy persons or more, and that he was permitted by the said keeper openly and publicly to preach unto them; and that the said Eaton hath oftentimes affirmed in his said sermons that baptism was the doctrine of devils, and its origin was an institution from the devil; and oftentimes he would rail against your grace, affirming that all bishops were heretics, blasphemers, and anti-Christians. That the said keeper, having been noticed hereof by the petitioner, who desired him to be a means that these great resorts and conventicles might be prevented, and that he would reprove the said Eaton for the same, and remove him to some other place of the prison. That, hereupon, the said keeper in a disdainful manner replied that the petitioner should meddle with what he had to do, and if he did dislike the said Eaton and his conventicles, he would remove the petitioner into some worse place of the prison. That at this time there was a conventicle of sixty persons or more—that the said keeper coming into the room where the conventicle was,

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(2.) *Congregational History*, Waddington, p. 276.

and the said Eaton preaching unto them and maintaining dangerous opinions—having received the said assembly, he said there was a very fair and good company, and staying there some season, departed without distaste thereat, to the great encouragement of the said Eaton and the said persons to frequent the said place. That the said keeper had a strict charge from the said Commission to have a special care of the said Eaton, and that since the said keeper hath several times *permitted him to go abroad to preach* to conventicles appointed by him, the said Eaton. That daily there doth resort to the said Eaton much people to hear him preach. That the petitioner reproving the said keeper for the said contempt, he thereupon abused him with uncivil language, and, further, caused the said Eaton to abuse the petitioner not only with most abusive words, but also with blows."

After the prisoners were released Lothorp sailed to Boston. Eaton fled to Holland; but finding that the climate did not suit his health he returned, and subsequently sailed to New England.

In the proceedings of the Commissioners for Ecclesiastical Causes, quoted in the MSS., by the Rev. Joseph Hunter, British Museum, *Hunteriana Collectanea*, 24, 460, we find that "Samuel Eaton, of West Kirby, in the diocese of Chester, clerk, was fined, about 1634, in sums amounting to from £50 to £500, by doubling each time, for contumacy in not appearing before the Commission. During the years between 1634 and 1640, Samuel Eaton was associated with the Puritans of New England, and, later, was a companion to Davenport and his brother, Theophilus Eaton, who emigrated before him, who had been elected the first Governor of New Haven.

Having heard of the change which had taken place in England, namely, that Strafford and Laud had been imprisoned, Samuel Eaton returned to England to assist his friends in their arduous and painful struggles for civil and religious liberty. On landing he went to Chester, where he was invited to preach in St. John's (1640-1). He accepted the invitation, but threw the congregation into the greatest consternation by the broad and sweeping ideas he so fearlessly advanced. One sermon particularly caused great excitement. The impression made upon his audience may be inferred from the notice taken of it in the year



1641 by Sir T. Aston, who, in a "Remonstrance against Presbytery," says "Samuel Eaton preached a sermon at St. John's (Chester) on his return from New England in 1640, which excited much attention."

Another incident occurred about this time which tended to bring Samuel Eaton before the public. The Long Parliament was regarded as a reforming parliament, and the Cheshire Puritans determined they would make the most of their opportunity. They, therefore, began an agitation, declaring it necessary to petition Parliament for redress. Accordingly they drew up a petition which bears the date of 1641, which was presented in due course to Parliament. As Eaton was one of the leading spirits in this matter, and as his sermon at St John's had created much feeling among the Episcopalians against him, it was determined that a counter petition should be drawn up and forwarded to the King and the Peers, with some of the most objectionable parts of his sermon appended.

It is highly probable that Robert Dukinfield became acquainted with Samuel Eaton through the excitement caused by his sermon and the conspicuous part he took in drawing up and forwarding the petition to Parliament, and as he himself held advanced opinions, he would be prepared to receive Eaton as a champion of the cause, and a true advocate of his own views. Shortly after this petition had been sent to Parliament Eaton came to Dukinfield, and was kindly received by Robert Dukinfield, better known as Colonel Dukinfield.

"Adjoining the Old Hall (his residence at that time) there was a small gothic chapel, originally the private oratory and domestic chapel of the Dukinfield family." This chapel was placed at the disposal of Eaton, who laboured most assiduously, and gathering a congregation, formed in this place the first Independent Church in the north of England. Yea, there are some who hold the opinion that it was the first Independent Church in the whole of England, and quote in proof the following passage, which occurs in the work, by Edward's, entitled *Gan-*

*græna*, 1645 or 6 :—"This church of Dukinfield is the first Independent Church visible and framed, which is set up in *England*, being before the Apologists came from *Holland*, and so before their setting up their churches here in London." The church had two ministers, as we learn from a pamphlet published conjointly by them, entitled "A defence of sundry positions and Scriptures alleged to justify the Congregationall way, by Samuel Eaton, Teacher, and Timothy Taylor, Pastor, of the Church in Duckinfield, in Cheshire, 1645."<sup>(4)</sup>

The following curious story has been preserved by an historian of those days, relating to a singular and mysterious incident, which is supposed to have occurred during a service which Eaton conducted at Dukinfield. "There is a Godly minister who was lately in London, that related with a great deal of confidence the following story, as a most certain truth, known to many of that county (Cheshire), 'that last summer the Church of Dukinfield (of which Master Eaton and Master Taylor are pastor and teacher) being met in their chapel to the performing of their worship and service, as Master Eaton was preaching, there was heard the perfect sound as of a man beating a march on a drum, and it was heard as coming into the chappel, and then going up all along the ile through the people, and so about the chappel, but nothing seen; which Master Eaton preaching, and the people that sate in the several parts of the chappel heard, in so much that it terrified Master Eaton and the people, caused him to give over preaching and fall to praying; but the march still beating they broke up their exercise for that time, and were glad to be gone.' " The relater of this story sought to lay before his audience the inferences he drew from this singular phenomenon, which are as curious as the story itself. "Now, I conceive," he continued, "this passage of Providence towards the Independents speaks much to them and the kingdom. . . . First, that the Independents are for warres, desirous of warres, to maintain and uphold their Independent churches by them; and for a new warre with Scotland, as much

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(4. The only work of Eaton's supposed to be extant.

as ever an unhappy boy did to be at fisty-cuffs with another boy. Second, the warres which they would have and occasion shall prove their ruine, the means to overthrow all their conventicles. They are greedy of a warre to establish them, but as now the beating of this drum drove them out of the chappel, broke up their meeting, so shall the warre which they have sought, overthrow all their opinions, meetings, and cast them out of England for ever.”<sup>(5)</sup>

The Independents, through the exploits of Cromwell and his ironsides, were now in the ascendancy, and a petition strongly deprecating the steps taken by the Presbyterians, to make Presbyterianism a National or State religion, was forwarded to Parliament. In Cheshire, Eaton was the greatest opponent of the Presbyterian system.

In the autobiography of Adam Martindale, a Lancashire Presbyterian, there also appears the following paragraph, referring to the same period :—

“ This was a bustling yeare (1646), wherein the Presbyterial and Congregational governments were like Jacob and Esau struggling in the wombe. The latter not waiting for the civil sanction as the former did, was got into possession at Dukinfield, in Cheshire . . . at Gorton . . . and at Birch. The Presbyterians were as busy, especially some, to get their governments settled all over the county (Lancashire), and that all separate congregations might be suppressed. A petition was set on foot that summer to that purpose, subscribed by 12,578 hands, though as is usual in these cases, multitudes of the subscribers were drawne on by the persuasions and examples of others, and some of them soon after subscribed an anti-petition to it ; but at last, leave was got, and an establishment, with some limitations, of the Presbyterial government throughout the county.”<sup>(6)</sup>

From this passage we learn that Presbyterianism was established in the county of Lancashire, the only place in the

(5.) *Edward's Gangrena*, part iii., pp. 164-165.

(6.) *Autobiography of Adam Martindale*, pp. 61-62. Chetham Society.

whole of England, with the exception of the metropolis. The opposition of Eaton, supported by Colonel Robert Dukinfield, Timothy Taylor, and his congregation, saved Cheshire from the yoke of Presbyterianism. The Ordinance, therefore, did not take effect in Cheshire as in Lancashire.

Sometime prior to the year 1648, Eaton, through the influence of his friend and patron, Colonel Robert Dukinfield, was appointed chaplain to the garrison at Chester; retaining at the same time his position as "teacher of the church at Dukinfield." While officiating in the aforesaid capacity at Chester, he established the first Independent Church in that city.<sup>(7)</sup>

Shortly after the formation of this church he felt it necessary to resign his position as chaplain to the garrison, and returned to Dukinfield. He had discovered that his frequent absence from his church had acted very deleteriously on his congregation there, and he prepared to return to Dukinfield to take the oversight of the church he had first planted, rather than remain at Chester. He was succeeded in the pastorate of the church at Chester by a person named John Knowles, who proved shortly after his introduction to the congregation to be a socinian. This was a great grief to Eaton, who, in order to counteract the influence of Knowles, and to establish the members in the truth, wrote a small treatise, entitled "The Mystery of God Incarnate."<sup>(8)</sup> To

(7.) The place in which this church was formed cannot be stated with absolute certainty, but there is the strongest presumption in favour of believing that it assembled in the "Chapel of the Castle," dedicated to St. Mary, "and memorable as the place in which James II. attended his Roman Catholic devotions, when on a visit to Bishop Cartwright."

(8.) The full text of the title of this work is "The Mystery of God Incarnate; or the word made flesh cleared up, a vindication of certain Scriptures, produced to prove the Divinity of Jesus Christ, from the corrupt glosses, false interpretations, and sophistical arguments of Mr. John Knowles, who denies the Divinity of Christ. Also certain Annotations and observations upon the pamphlet, entitled 'A Confession of Faith concerning the Holy Trinity according to the Scriptures,' together with the coppie of a letter sent by him to the Committee of Gloucester, concerning his Faith touching the doctrine of the Trinity. By Samuel Eaton, teacher of the church at Duckenfield. Whereunto is annexed the attestation of Philip Nye, John Owen, Joseph Caryl, lyde Simpson, William Greehill, George Griffith, Tho. Harrison, London, 1650." It is dedicated "To the faithful in Christ in and about Chester." We quote the following passage from this work, not only because it confirms the statement that he was the founder of the church in Chester, but as supplying the reason why he resigned the position of minister, and returned to Dukinfield:—"For your sakes (his congregation at Chester) it was that I desired, and in some kind endeavour his removal from among you, because I saw that your affection for

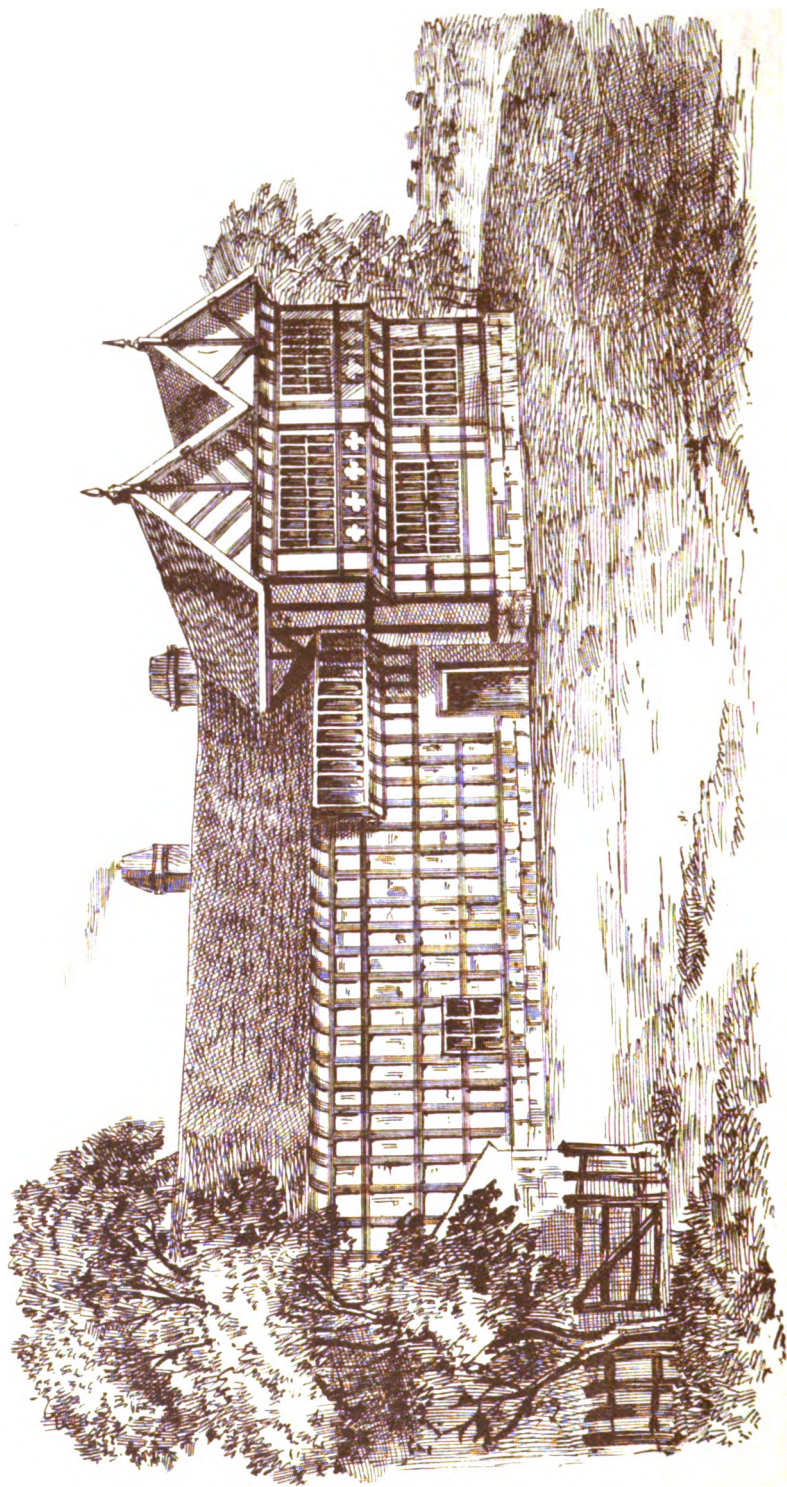
which Knowles replied, Samuel Eaton following him with a rejoinder, in a work entitled "A Vindication or further confirmation of some other Scriptures produced to prove the Divinity of Jesus Christ."<sup>(9)</sup> Eventually through the united influence of Samuel Eaton and John Murcot, of West Kirby, John Knowles was removed from Chester; and Eaton directed his attention to the affairs of his congregation in Dukinfield, which needed, at that time, all the skill, perseverance and patience he could command, to manage. During his absence a class of obtrusive and ill-disposed persons became associated with the church, and began to lord it over God's heritage. Martindale calls them "gifted persons." They were evidently persons of strong prejudices, and great vanity, and seem ever to have been on the alert to show the superiority of their gifts. Timothy Taylor came in for no little share of their criticism and obloquy. They took undue advantage of him in Eaton's absence, and made his position a most unenviable one. By degrees the pulpit had fallen into the hands of these questionable characters, each of whom, in his turn, made an attempt at preaching. Elated with their success they were filled with pride, and with an air of importance, which ever attaches itself to a little learning, each one set himself

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his person and parts would certainly be a snare to many of you, and enslave you to his doctrine, which was not like to want a spacious presentment to commend it to you; not that I wish one hair of his head to fall to the ground for his hurt (the Lord he knoweth), but my earnest desire was that you might be kept from evil. Nor had I any design to re-invest myself into place, or power, or profit, or honour amongst you, for then I might have continued in the place, and in the power and profit of it while I possessed it; for no one took it from me, nor could do while I faithfully discharged it; but I voluntarily quitted it, because I could not fulfil my ministry to another people and yet live among you, but the man I designed for you was designed of God to another people in Berwick . . . . When I saw that he was liked to abide at least for a time among you, I then attempted the separation of you from him . . . . And I had the occurrence of the elders of the churches both of the south and of the north therein, that walked in the same way and order with yourselves; but this was fruitless, though I have much peace and comfort in it, for I sought not myself but your good in it. To the faithful and dearly beloved the Saints of Jesus Christ in and about Chester, especially to all such who have known the doctrine, read the papers of John Knowles, and who have been familiar hearers and followers." (Urwick's Nonconformity in Cheshire, pp. 16, 17.)

- (9.) The full title is "A Vindication or further confirmation of some other Scriptures produced to prove the Divinity of Jesus Christ, disturbed and miserably wrested and abused by Mr. John Knowles. Also the Doctrine of Christ's satisfaction and of reconciliation on God's part to the creature, cleered up from Scripture, which of late hath been much impugned. And a discourse concerning the springing and spreading of Error, and of the means of cure, and of preservation against it. By Samuel Eaton, teacher of the Church of Jesus Christ, commonly stiled the church at Duckenfield. London, 1651."





**DENTON HALL.**  
*The Ancient Residence of the Denton Branch of the Holland Family.*







up as not only knowing more than Timothy Taylor, but as a paragon of virtue. Consequently, being unable to see the use of a pastor, "Taylor was dismissed."<sup>(10)</sup>

When Eaton returned he found the church in a most deplorable condition, through the conduct of these "bitter and presumptuous fellows." Eaton, therefore, finding it impossible to conciliate the different parties, who were "bringing the church into disrepute" by their scandalous contentions, resolved to leave them to their fate, and removed to Stockport, where he remained until 1662, when he was ejected. Shortly after Eaton's withdrawal from Dukinfield, the church of the *gifted brethren* ceased to exist. Some of the best disposed went to Denton, where Samuel Eaton and many of the Independents, after Bartholomew's day, continued to meet and eventually the two congregations were merged, and Independency as a distinct body in this district for some years ceased to exist.

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(10.) Timothy Taylor, subscribed "Pastor of the church at Duckinfield," was the son of Thomas Taylor, of Hempstead, in Hertfordshire. He entered Queen's College, Oxford, in 1626, and took holy orders in 1634, and became the vicar of Almesley, in Herefordshire, where he preached twice every Sunday. In the book entitled "A defence of Sundry Positions and Scriptures alleged to Justify the Congregationall Way," there is the following account of his conversion to Independency: 'Some years before the bishops fell, and while their power seemed bound as with a band of iron and brass, being enforced by the Chancellor of Hereford to turn his afternoon lecture into a catechism lecture, upon that occasion studying more elaborately and industriously the second commandment. Through the rich grace and mercy of God, he not only saw the evil of Episcopacy and ceremonies imposed, but also repented of the use of them, and publicly in the parish preached against them, and for all the substantial of that way of Congregational government, which ever since, and at that day, he hath, and doth judge to bear most conformity with the word of truth. Afterwards being troubled in the Bishop's court for nonconformity, and having no hope of liberty, he did, by consent leave Almele, and lived about three years in a small peculiar place exempt from Episcopal jurisdiction, namely, Longton-upon-Trene, Shropshire.' His next removal was to Dukinfield, where he became associated in the work of the ministry with Samuel Eaton, and where he continued to labour until "dismissed." See Wood's *Athenae Oxonienses*. After his dismissal he went to Ireland, and "in 1650 he became the minister of Carrickfergus, then restored by the Presbyterians and Independents. After the restoration of Charles he was silenced, and removed to a hired house at Grange, near Carrickfergus, and carried on the trade of preaching in private. In 1688 he lived at Dublin, and took charge of a church of Dissenters there, as colleague with Samuel Mather, and continued there till death." See *Athenae Oxonienses*.

## FROM 1662 TO 1681.

The Act of Uniformity—Ejection of John Harrison and Samuel Eaton—  
John Angier—Samuel Angier—Troubles at Denton—Seeks refuge at  
Dukinfield—His building watched, &c.

THE religious disputation between the Episcopalians and the Puritans was brought to a crisis by the Act of Uniformity. Hitherto holy men of God, who did not conform to the ritual, had remained in the Church of England. The Puritans had not, up to this time, as a distinct body of Nonconformists, openly renounced Episcopacy, nor separated themselves from the establishment. Within the pale of the Church of England there were many Puritans who were content to remain, so long as they were allowed to use the Presbyterian order of service; but the Act of Uniformity put an end to the conditions under which they were allowed to worship God according to their Puritanical ideas, and made conformity compulsory. The issue was that 2,000 Puritan ministers left the establishment as Nonconformists, which became the generic name in which all the different religious bodies, dissenting from the Episcopalian polity, were included, and by which they have ever since been known.

Among the 2,000 ejected ministers we find the names of several local divines, viz., Samuel Eaton, of "Stopport," formerly of Dukinfield; Samuel Angier, of Christ Church, Oxford; and John Harrison, rector of the Parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, while John Angier, of Denton, was also much perplexed as to what course to take.

All these men waited for the advent of "dark Bartholomew's Day" with considerable misgiving. The nearer the day came the more oppressive became the thought of separation. At length the last Sabbath dawned upon them. It was a dark and sorrowful day in Ashton-under-Lyne and neighbourhood. The church bell,

as if with muffled sound, called the worshippers together. The mild and holy matron, hastened, with dejected look, to respond to the call, accelerating her steps as she approached the house of prayer; the man of toil pressed forward to pay his devotions at the shrine of grace, while the tears rolled down his bronzed face; yea, even sadness was depicted on the countenances of the little children as they went their ways along the hedgerows and streets, for they too had discovered that it was the parting day. Intercourse with heaven was opened as they stood around the common altar with anxious fears. Alternate prayer and praise arose like a bitter wail, welling up from broken hearts. At length came the end,—the commendation—the final benediction—the last farewell! and the congregation returned homeward with tearful eyes to reflect upon their spiritual bereavement, and their beloved pastor to relinquish his charge, with weeping relatives and friends to face the hard world with no immediate prospect before them but a cold dreary winter.

But the most distinguished Nonconformist incumbent—who succeeded more than any other man in impressing his holy and benignant spirit on this district, and in giving a most distinct and beneficial character to the religious efforts of the half century that followed the restoration of the Monarchy—was John Angier, of Denton. He was born at Dedham, in Essex, in 1605, and was the eldest son of John Angier, a clothier in fair circumstances, of the same place. He studied first at Cambridge, and afterwards in the family of two distinguished Puritan divines, Mr. Rogers, of Dedham, and Mr. John Cotton, of Boston. By the mediation of the latter gentleman, he obtained Episcopal ordination from the hands of Mr. Lewis Bayley, a Welsh bishop, *without subscription to the Articles*. His first charge was Ringley Chapel, in Lancashire. Mr. Angier's habitual nonconformity to the discipline of the Church was the occasion of frequent complaints, to some of which, especially when they proceeded from the authoritative voice of Archbishop Laud, Dr. Bridgman could not turn a deaf ear. The residence of Mr. Angier, at Ringley, was disturbed by sus-

pensions and other hostile Ecclesiastical proceedings; and in the year 1632, he—as much by the advice as permission of the Bishop, was removed to Denton Chapel, which, being situated at a distance from his former charge, and in a district then comparatively obscure, enabled the Bishop to slight the informations of Mr. Angier's persecutors, and to leave him quietly to follow out his plans of active usefulness and his course of holy living.

The Chapelry at Denton was not obtained by Mr. Angier without a struggle, some portion of the congregation having been prepossessed in favour of Mr. Root, who afterwards became a distinguished Independent in the West Riding of Yorkshire. Most important consequences followed the judicious and happy choice of the Denton people. The pastor whom they selected in the year 1632 continued, till death, faithfully to watch over them, and to diffuse good influences through the whole district for nearly half a century. But the spirit of persecution followed him to Denton. Writing in 1647, he says during the first nine or ten years of his residence there he preached not above *two single* years without interruption, and in that time was *twice excommunicated*. That though Sabbath assemblies were distracted and sorrowfully broken up, and his departure from his habitation and people often forced, and no means of return left in sight, yet, through the fervent prayers of the church, God renewed his liberty. He was firm and fearless in the day of tribulation, and mild and tolerant in the day of victory. Oliver Heywood says “He had Catholic principles, and loved anything of Christ wherever he saw it, and continued this good old Puritan spirit to his dying day.” The Rev. Brook Aspland, M.A., quoting the opinion of another person concerning Mr. Angier, says “When new confusions arose in the kingdom, when evil dissensions and open wars took place, he continued in his work and station; and although he adhered to the Parliament, yet his affectionate prayers for the King, temperate spirit, and faithful attachment to his principles, procured him goodwill from

his greatest adversaries. He maintained a friendly intercourse with all sober persons of different persuasions in political and ecclesiastical affairs, instances whereof I could give, and testimonials of his inoffensive behaviour, even from such as differed much from him. His moderation towards the Royalists and Church of England party in their time of discomfiture would doubtless be remembered to his advantage when, in the course of years, they returned to unlimited power."<sup>(1)</sup> That it was so is evident from the toleration held out to him on the passing of the Act of Uniformity. He was one of very few persons in the whole kingdom who were suffered to remain in charge of their benefices after 1662, and not conform to the ritual of the Episcopalian Church. In addition, there were other circumstances most favourable to his continuance in his benefice. "The two principal families of the chapelry were avowedly and decidedly Puritan. The stipend was small, the chapel wage twenty pounds a year, the legal claim to which was doubtful, and neither the Hollands nor the Hydes, who together contributed thirteen of the twenty pounds, would willingly have paid 'the wage' to any conformist, who perforce might occupy the place of their beloved pastor. Besides, the 'common people heard him gladly,' and were most deeply attached to him; while the farmers were as fond of him as Colonel Holland or Squire Hyde."<sup>(2)</sup> He was, altogether, a man of great influence in this neighbourhood. This is accounted for when we remember, as Calamy says, "That he was of a sweet, moderate, healing spirit, an excellent casuist, a man mighty in prayer, a hard student, of exact conversation, very affable and courteous, and in general a pattern of holiness." As he had always acted with kindness towards the Episcopalians, and had married into the Mosley family, and was thereby related to many of the neighbouring justices, the Ecclesiastical Courts spared him in executing their warrants. The magistrates often said "'He is an old man, and will not live long. Let us not trouble him.' They were glad

(1.) *History of Nonconformity in Dukinfield*, by Rev. R. Brook Aspland, M.A., pp. 5-6. See also *Christian Reformer*, New Series, vol. i., 1845, pp. 745-6.

(2.) *History of Nonconformity in Lancashire*, by Robert Halley, vol. ii., p. 146.

to avoid the odium of disturbing so peaceful and quiet an old man." But despite the indulgence of the local magistrates his people were exceedingly alarmed lest the Act of Uniformity would act detrimentally to their interests. They did not know but that "Dark Bartholomew's Day" would destroy the peaceful relations of pastor and people, or that it would not snap the cords which bound them together in a holy and affectionate fraternity. Hence they were very sorrowful, and filled with gloomy fears. But "on the passing of the Act of Uniformity it was observed that Mr. Angier said very little about it. To conform would have been to contradict all the professions of his ministerial life, and yet he made no preparations for his removal. He attended no conference of his brethren, who often met to consider what they should do in the time of trial. He spent little time in conversation with his friends, much in prayer with God. He intimated his purpose to no one; probably he had no purpose to intimate, but silently waited what the day might require. On the Sunday preceding St. Bartholomew's Day, when several ministers in the neighbourhood (John Harrison, of Ashton, and Samuel Eaton, of Stockport) preached their farewell sermons, John Angier said nothing about coming events. As the week passed on he seemed to be taking no thought for the morrow, for the Master had said to him, 'Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.' So Bartholomew's Sunday came and went, but it was to him, so far as the people could observe, very like other Sundays of the year. At the hour of public worship the bell sounded as it had done on other mornings for the coming of Mr. Angier. The people, as they usually did in summer time, gathered in groups in the churchyard waiting for the commencement of the service. The good minister walked without noticing anyone from the parsonage to the church, ascended the pulpit, conducted the service in the Presbyterian manner, and retired on its completion to his humble residence. So passed 'Dark Bartholomew's', scarcely casting its dark shadow over Denton.'<sup>(3)</sup>

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(3.) *History of Nonconformity in Lancashire*, by Robert Halley, vol. ii., p. 146.

In consequence of the ejection of John Harrison and Samuel Eaton, many of the Nonconformists from Ashton and other places went to worship at Denton Chapel. This influx of worshippers was attended with such an increased responsibility that John Angier felt himself unable to meet the demands made upon his strength, for his health at that time was but feeble. He determined therefore to secure the services of a young man to assist him in the discharge of his onerous duties. The first person called to share with him the duties of the Denton Chapel, after the Act of Uniformity, was a young man named John Jollie, a son of Major Jollie, the Provost-Marshal of the Parliamentary army. After serving Mr. Angier for some time he obtained, without conforming, the possession of Norbury Chapel.<sup>(4)</sup> After his removal Mr. Angier secured the services of his nephew, Samuel Angier, who remained at Denton until his uncle's death in 1677.

Samuel Angier was the son of Bezaleel Angier, and was born at Dedham, in the county of Essex, October 28th, 1639. His early education was obtained at Westminster School, under the celebrated "pedagogue," Dr. Bushby, for whom he had ever after the greatest respect.<sup>(5)</sup> From thence he moved to Christ Church, Oxford, where he became a student, and made the acquaintance of Dr. Owen, one of the most distinguished men of those times. Owen, discerning the great ability of the young man, took him into his own house, where he obtained much valued instruction, and was finally called to labour with him as assistant. Here he continued till 1662, when he was ejected by the Act of Uniformity.<sup>(6)</sup> His ejection did not destroy his love to labour for his Master, but, despite the persecuting laws, he continued as occasion offered to preach the gospel in conventicles. In 1664

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(4.) *History of Nonconformity in Lancashire*, by Robert Halley, vol. ii., p. 151.

(5.) In his register, kept while in Dukinfield, we find the following entry:—"April 6.—Dr. Bushby, my master at Westminster [School] near 40 years ago, dyed April 6, 1695, being as ye news letter saith 96 years old."

(6.) *Life and Works of Dr. Owen*, vol. i., p. 302.



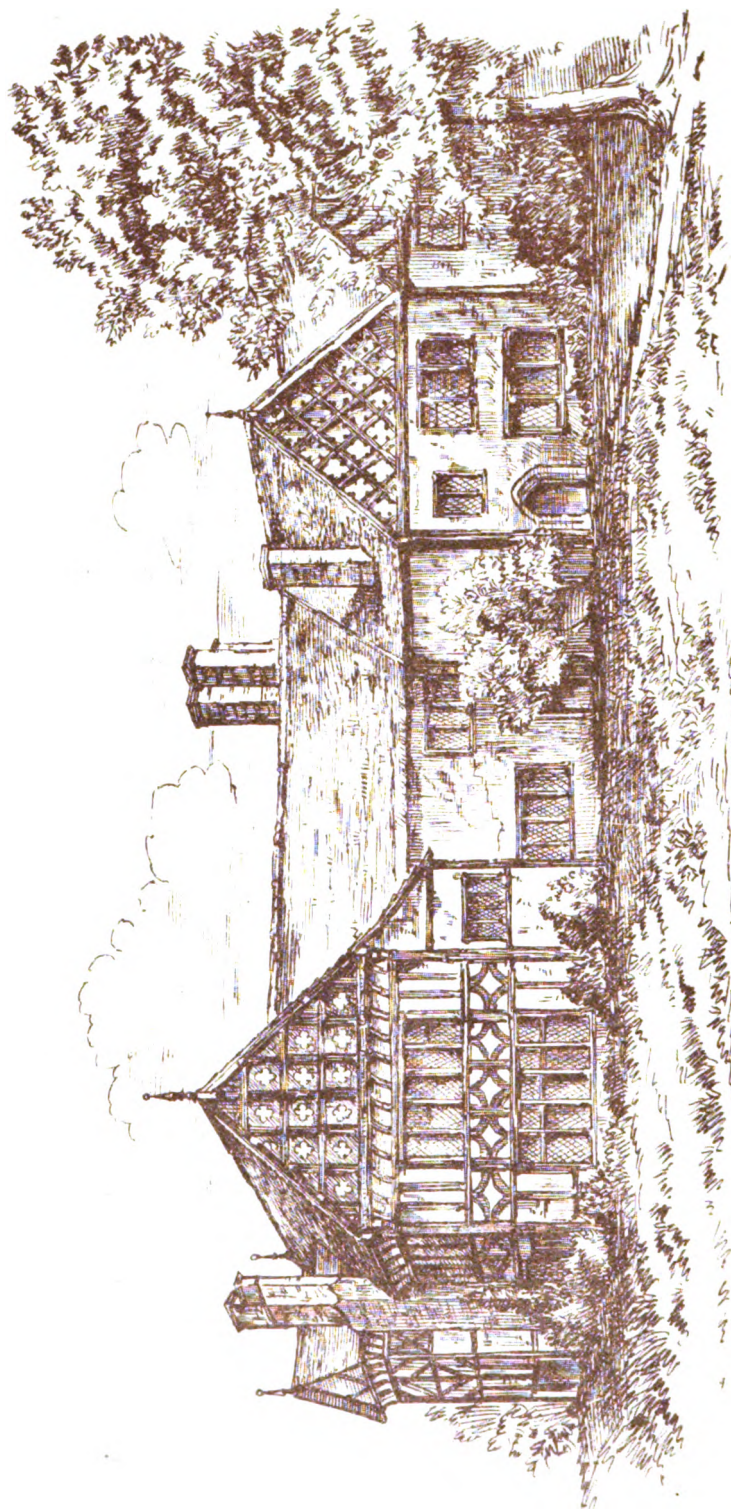
the Conventicle Act was passed,<sup>(7)</sup> but Mr. Angier, nothing daunted, continued to preach, flying from place to place to evade incarceration. In 1665 the great plague raged in London. The clergy of the establishment deserted their flocks and fled for their lives, and left their poor parishioners without help to perish. Many of the ejected ministers, moved to tears by the deplorable condition of the people, went amongst them to render what assistance they were able. Some of these men, taking advantage of the absence of the clergyman, preached to the congregations of the poor and afflicted people as they fell, one after another, victims to the dreadful scourge. This gave great offence to those in power, and led to the passing of the infamous Act known as the Oxford or Five Miles Act.<sup>(8)</sup> Most of the Nonconforming ministers refused to take the oath, and the result was that many good and holy men were banished from the towns and villages in which they had laboured with great success. In Ashton and neighbourhood this act had a very painful result. John Angier was driven from his charge for a time; John Harrison, of Ashton, who had already been ejected by the Act of Uniformity, was compelled to seek shelter in Salford, while Samuel Angier, now a young man in his 25th year, fled from place to place to avoid the execution of warrants taken out against him.<sup>(9)</sup> In 1666 he came to Denton as assistant to his uncle. "It is no slight proof," says Mr. Aspland, "of the younger Angier's devotion to the work of the ministry that he undertook it at a time when persecution was at its height,

(7.) By the Conventicle Act it was enacted that any person above 16 years of age, present at any meeting for any religious exercise not according to the Church of England, where there were five or more persons besides the household, was, for the *first offence*, to suffer *three months'* imprisonment, or pay £5; for the *second offence*, *six months*, or £10; and for the *third offence*, to be banished for seven years, or to pay a fine of £100; and in case of return or escape, to suffer death without the benefit of the clergy.

(8.) This Act restrained all Nonconforming ministers, with a penalty of £40, who would not take the following oath:—"I, A.B., do swear that it is not lawful upon any pretence whatsoever to take up arms against the King, and I do abhor that traitorous position of taking up arms by his authority against his person, or against those that are commissioned by him; and that I will not at any time endeavour any alteration of the government either in Church or State."—Neal's *Puritans*, vol. iv., p. 369. It was further enacted that "those who shall refuse this oath shall be incapable of teaching in any public or private schools, or of taking any boarders; and shall not come within *five miles* of any parish, town, or place wherein they have been parson."

(9.) *Life of Dr. Owen*, vol. i., p. 302.





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DUKINFIELD OLD HALL AND CHAPEL.





shortly after the passing of the Oxford Act, and while the Conventicles Act was in rigorous force.

After he had toiled at Denton some time it was decided that he, along with others, should be ordained to the work of the Christian ministry. The particulars of this ordination, which are of very peculiar interest, inasmuch as they form one of the most important epochs in the annals of Nonconformity, are preserved in the life of Oliver Heywood, who took part in the ceremony. We are informed that this ordination was "the first Presbyterian ordination among the *Nonconformists* in the north of England, and perhaps the first in any part of the kingdom."<sup>(10)</sup> It was held at the house of Mr. Robert Eaton, in Deansgate, Manchester, October 29th, 1672. Mr. Newcome asked the usual questions, and took from him the confession of faith. Mr. Newcome also delivered a discourse on the occasion, taking for his text, I. Timothy iv. 12, "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." He also delivered the charge to the young ministers, who had received ordination along with Mr. Angier. "There was something very affecting in these young men devoting themselves thus solemnly to the ministry in the midst of tribulation."

The failing strength of Mr. John Angier, soon after the ordination of his nephew, began to give his people some uneasiness. They could see that the end was not far distant, and they did all they could to make his closing days as pleasant as possible. They tried to smooth his passage down into the valley of shadows; but, notwithstanding their noble, self-sacrificing efforts, his declining years were clouded with afflictions and sorrow. Two years before his death he lost his beloved partner. She had shared his sorrows, and done much to comfort him when labouring under the consciousness of increasing infirmity. About this time he was also most deeply grieved by the falling away of his son from his religious character. As the end drew near he

(10.) Hunter's *Life of Heywood*, pp. 224-225.

became more anxious about his people. "When conscious of the approach of death, he prayed very fervently for his dear flock, acknowledging the mercy of God in having kept the door of religious liberty open to *them*, while it had been closed to others. He remembered his nephew in his prayer, expressing an earnest desire that he might be permitted to stay and minister to the little flock. He died, or as it is declared on his tombstone, he 'Rested from his labours' September 1st, 1677, in the 72nd year of his age, 49th of his ministry, and 46th year at Denton. He was buried on the second day following his death, within the chapel at Denton, in the aisle, fronting the pulpit. His remains were followed to the grave by two knights, and a large multitude of people, all in deep lamentation." John Angier was the minister who held the cause of Nonconformity together in this district when all other nonconforming ministers were compelled to relinquish their positions by the Act of 1662. It was, therefore, from his hand that Samuel Angier received the torch, which has ever since been burning with a stronger and purer light in Ashton and neighbourhood. But, "the tolerance which had permitted an aged and most exemplary servant of God to live and die in peace in that place, which had known the sanctitude of his life for six-and-forty years, was exhausted; and the Sabbath-day on which Mr. Angier's remains awaited the funeral rites of the following morning was the last day on which at Denton Chapel an ejected minister enjoyed the liberty of ordinances."

A petition was immediately presented to the patrons of the chapel by the inhabitants, praying, that "Whereas Mr. Samuel Angier hath for many years approved himself very faithful, painful, careful, and laborious in the work of the ministry . . . . . it is our earnest desire and humble request that he may still continue among us." The Wardens and Fellows of Manchester College, however, refused to allow a nonconformist to be appointed to the vacant chapelry, and immediately presented their nominee to the Bishop for induction; and James Ogden, a conformist, was appointed. Driven from the chapel, Samuel Angier fought with

“more determination than dignity” for the little parsonage; but as Mr. Holland recognised the appointment of John Ogden, Mr. Angier was compelled to vacate that also.

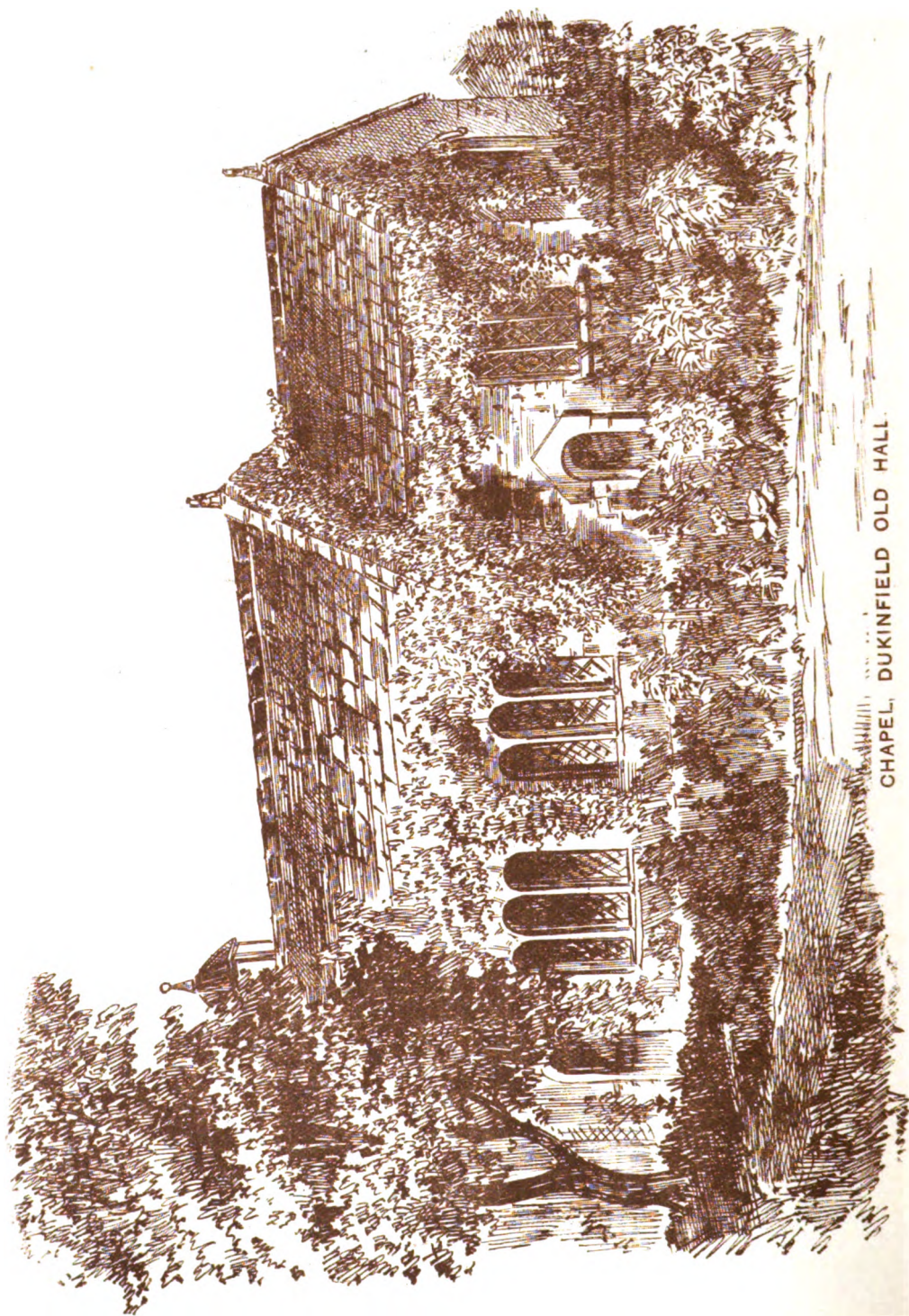
It would appear from a letter Mr. Holland wrote to him that the right of the appointment on the part of the Manchester College was disputed, hence some have thought that this was the reason why Mr. Angier and his friends contended so strenuously for the “little parsonage.” On the other hand, it is evident that Mr. Angier suspected that the right of appointment was really in the hands of the wardens. The true cause why he and his congregation stood their ground so long is declared in the following quotation:—“The more they (the wardens) troubled him, the better his people loved him; it was *not the house he so much regarded, as to be amongst his people; that malgré* all they (the wardens) could do, he would continue conventiculating; that as Nonconformity had been there so many years, so it should continue.”<sup>(11)</sup>

Mr. Angier came to Dukinfield about August, 1677,<sup>(12)</sup> “influenced, probably, by the kind patronage of the Dukinfield family, and by the circumstance that here many of his uncle’s flock resided.” Mr. Angier did not, as has been supposed, begin immediately to preach in Dukinfield, but it would appear that he and his people in Dukinfield walked to Denton, where they unitedly worshipped for some time. In consequence of the feeling being so strong against Mr. Ogden in the district, which vented itself in rather mischievous ways sometimes, he was obliged to leave before he had been there very long. The next person appointed to the living was Roger Dale. The people petitioned against him, stating “That he is put into the place without the consent of the Chapelry, and contrary to the usual way for a

(11.) Chetham Miscellanies, *Denton Chapel*, p. 82.

(12.) This date is confirmed by the following entry in his register, which he began to keep immediately on coming to Dukinfield:—“August 12 and 28—B[orn] and Bap.:—John, son of Sir Robert Dukinfield, in ye Parish of Stockport and County Palatine of Chester, and his Lady Jane was born August ye twelfth and Baptised August 28th, 1677.” This is the first entry in the register.





CHAPEL, DUKINFIELD OLD HALL.

hundred years. But Mr. Dale and his supporters were determined to fight it out to the bitter end. In one of his letters he writes:—"Confidence is not wanting already openly to express the design of getting a Nonconformist in, *if any devices can get me out.*" Whenever Messrs. Ogden and Dale were absent, the people took the liberty to invite Mr. Angier to preach "funeral sermons in the chapel," much to the annoyance of Ogden and Dale; hence, with considerable feeling, Mr. Dale writes:—"I can prove that some have had the impudence, since Mr. Angier's suppressing, to bring him in the absence of Mr. Ogden and me, both to preach funeral sermons in the chapel, and to make long speeches at the grave side of his own composure instead of the Church prayer." From the same letters we learn that Mr. Angier held services at Denton in a barn. Even after he came to live in Dukinfield, large congregations assembled in this way from the surrounding district to honour the pastor of their choice, while the preacher at the chapel was forsaken. The reference is as follows:—"John Johnson frequently had him (Mr. Angier) at his house, encouraged him to preach in a barn belonging to his wife till he was informed against." It was, therefore, after the suppression of this conventicle that Mr. Angier began to preach in his own house in Dukinfield, which, becoming too small, he opened a barn close by for public worship. According to the most trustworthy authorities, the first meeting of the church in Dukinfield took place on May 29th, 1681, but according to a memorandum in Mr. Angier's own handwriting he did not begin to preach in the barn *in Dukinfield* until October 10th, 1686.<sup>(13)</sup> Hence, Mr. Dale continues:—"After that (the suppression of the conventicle at Denton) he (John Johnson) went publicly and constantly to hear him (Mr. Angier) each Lord's day, while the said Mr. Angier preached in his own house or barn in Dukinfield, which was too shameful a time to mention . . . . I have

13.) There is some confusion in the record of events about this time. It is clear that Mr. Angier did hold service in a barn prior to 1686. Therefore, we presume, that what he means by this entry is simply a statement of the time when the barn was reopened for public worship, and fully recognized as lawful by the authorities.

presented (for punishment) such as neither brought their children to me nor to Manchester, but to Mr. Sam. Angier, to be unlawfully baptised . . . . or such as have buried at Denton, and then had their funeral sermons preached by Mr. Sam. Angier, the Non-conformist, at Dukinfield." In another letter he says:—"Mr. Angier was, and is, great with them (his parishioners) as Diana of old was with the Ephesians;" and that "Peter is notoriously robbed to pay Paul—I mean the ancient and usual wages of the chapel of Denton to supply the barn at Dukinfield."<sup>(14)</sup> This conventicle at Dukinfield was thus informed against, warrants taken out against those that attended, and the old barn watched.

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(14.) Chetham Miscellanies, *Denton Chapel*, pp. 89-102.



## FROM 1681 TO 1713.

Tradition<sup>(1)</sup>—Angier's Tenement—The Lord of the Manor—The Gallery at the Barn—The Toleration Act—Activity of the Nonconformists—The Old Chapel, Dukinfield—Mr. Angier's character—Death and Interment.

ONE afternoon, in 1681, an old man was seen wending his way along a lonely road between Denton and Dukinfield. It had been a heavy sunless morning, so sultry and close that the solitary traveller had almost to gasp for breath as he tramped along covered with dust and sweat. The person to whom we refer had already reached the allotted space of human existence. He was of small stature, sallow countenance, and stooped slightly beneath the multitudinous burdens of more than three-score years and ten. He was evidently a man of no small determination. His language was the rustic vernacular of his own neighbourhood and day. He made no pretensions to anything beyond that of being a stern admirer of religion, and a great "stickler" for its freedom from all ceremonials. As he toiled along in his shirt sleeves, with a stick in his hand and his coat thrown loosely over his shoulder, his face wore a solemn and thoughtful appearance. He was aroused from the reverie into which he had fallen and brought suddenly to a standstill by the voice of a farmer watching his haymakers, hurrying them on in view of the approaching storm of rain. "The hay," he said, "would a bin up, had I not wasted the whole o' th' morning wi' th' new parson." "Wa, is it Dale yo' mean?" "Yes, Dale! He called early this morning to tell me that the authorities were determined to suppress the conventicle, and that if I had any respect for my-

(1.) Tradition can yet point out the place in a neighbouring wood where, on days set apart, under the watch of sentinels, and at nightfall, when they were less likely to be observed, the proscribed ministers were met by their faithful adherents! when the pious service of prayer, praise, and exhortation, had no other walls to surround it but the oaken thicket, and no other roof for its protection but the canopy of heaven.—*Monthly Repository*, o.s., vol. xviii., p. 682.

self and family I'd go to the chapel next Lord's day. That a watch was to be set around Mr. Angier's house and building, and that all who assembled there contrary to the law would either have to pay the fine or go to prison. I argued with him, and tried to show him that it would be much better for him to exercise some Christian forbearance and adopt some conciliatory method, and reasoned that it did not necessarily follow that he was in the right because the law was on his side; but he would not hear me, and he left with threats, his last words being 'keep away, if you have any respect for yourself.' " "Well! raily," cried the old man, "he's bin to eaur house wi' th' same impident message, bur I towd him we should go on wi' th' 'venticle, as they co it, for th' sake ov owd John. We'll ha' non ov his cerimony and tum foolery. As good owd John used t' say, we're nobbut plain folk an' we'll ha' a plain gospel, that wi will. Aw'll tell yo' wur it is, mester, he's gett'n so stuck up sin' Mester Holland's ta'en a bit o' notice o' him. Bur we'er non goin' t' gi' up. Na! Na! And that's my errant this moment to Mester Angier." Whereupon the old man waxed warm, shook his stick, and at the same time rose as if to go, when some one was observed in the distance approaching. They looked in the direction of the coming stranger, and at length the younger of the two declared that it was no other than Mr. Angier himself; who, coming up to them, accosted them with the words, "All hail, my brethren! What news have you now? I see sorrow written on your countenances. Is your religious horizon as cloudy and portentous as the physical? I see a storm brewing in yonder clouds of livid tinge." The two brethren looked at one another, each waiting for the other to reply, but before their sad thoughts became articulate Mr. Angier continued,—“Be of good cheer; I know the worst.” “What! about the spies Dale has set to watch your house and buildings with the intent to destroy the conventicle?” they eagerly enquired. “Yes! all; and that is the purpose of my journey hither. They shall not defeat us. The meeting must be held, but not at my house, nor in my buildings, but in the ‘oaken thicket’ on the other side of Dukinfield hill, and that is the secret I bear to the

brethren. Meet me there at nightfall, and be of good courage all ye that hope in the Lord. The rest of the brethren will know meanwhile; but harken, be sure you come not by the ordinary route, lest you arouse suspicion, but come by the way best known to yourselves, to the shady nook in the wood. James, you'll go back to Denton, and inform the rest of the brethren, and at nightfall we'll meet to besiege the gates of heaven with petitions for succour and guidance." "Ya, ya," cried the old man, "we will, Mester Angier, sa return thi to thi own hame, an' God be wi thi." The old man having thus spoken started on his way back, while the farmer returned to his men and Mr. Angier to Dukinfield to make ready for the meeting. \* \* \* \* \*

That night was particularly dark. No star shone forth to light the cautious brethren on their way to the appointed nook in the wood; but despite the difficulties and dangers of the road, Mr. Angier and his people met as had been arranged. No hymn was sung, for fear of giving a clue to the spies of their whereabouts and purpose, but sentinels having been set at the various approaches to the place, they proceeded, with short but earnest prayers, to invoke the Almighty's benediction and protection. After a short exhortation they arranged for the next place of meeting, and appointed certain persons to act as sentinels on the occasion, and were about to conclude when one of the sentinels gave the unwelcome signal that a number of people appeared to be moving steadily in the direction of the hill. The worshippers looked with steadfast gaze into the darkness for some time, and at length decided, from the lights they carried, that they were no other than the spies and their confederates. It would appear that the suspicion of the spies had been aroused by the fact that they knew it was the night appointed for the conventicle, and that no one, not even Mr. Angier, was to be found about the house or building. No sooner did Mr. Angier perceive the danger in which they were placed, for every way of exit was well watched, than he began to wonder as to their means of escape. The spies were gaining steadily upon them—something must be done, and

done immediately—but what! they could not tell. Just at that moment, when at their wits' end, the storm, which had been gathering untold force during the day, broke upon them. The rain descended in torrents, as if a second deluge was at hand, and the lightning flashed in a beautiful but terrifying manner. One moment the whole earth seemed ablaze with its lurid streaks of fire—the next moment it seemed as if the world had rushed into the very blackness of darkness, while the thunder roared and rolled as if the Omnipotent hand were about to break up the foundations of the earth. The spies beheld the lightning—now playing about the tops of the trees—now flashing across their pathway, as if mocking their fears by its awful glare. No sooner did they observe this than their courage failed, and they discontinued their search and fled, so that when the storm ceased Mr. Angier and his companions returned to their homes in safety, but saw no man, although they ventured to return homeward by the ordinary pathways. Whatever became of the spies and their confederates, no one remained to tell; but it is clear they were not much enamoured of their occupation on that terrible night, for *they* never reappeared in the capacity of spies nor to break up the conventicle, but their places were filled by others whose consciences had not been aroused by the storm. In this way Mr. Angier and his people met for worship for some considerable time. When suspected of meeting in one place they fled to another, and thus successfully defeated the purpose of their pursuers, and continued to encourage one another until they obtained, under the Act of Toleration, a license for him to preach in his barn, which was afterwards known as “Angier's Tenement.”

In 1686, James II. made a declaration in favour of liberty of conscience, suspending the execution of all penal laws concerning religion, and freely pardoning all offences against them. Mr. Angier thereupon opened the barn for public worship in the village of Dukinfield, and began, according to a statement in his register, to preach in his barn on the 10th of October, 1686. The restrictions upon public worship being relaxed, the barn



soon became too small, and the worshippers determined to enlarge it. This they did by taking out part of the floor of the hayloft, while the other portion was allowed to remain to serve the purpose of a gallery. In this place the Lord and Lady of the Manor met with the villagers for worship, and for more than twenty years were exhorted, within its rude walls, to faith and good works by "Father Angier," as he was then called.

James was now succeeded by William and Mary, and a new but brighter era opened for the Nonconformists. With their accession to the throne began "a system of moderation towards the scruples of Nonconformity, which greatly relaxed the ecclesiastical annoyance of the preceding sovereign." The Toleration Act was entitled "An Act for exempting their Majesties' Protestant subjects dissenting from the Church of England from the penalties of certain laws."<sup>(2)</sup> Delighting in their newly-acquired liberties, the Nonconformists began to bestir themselves. New places for worship in barns and elsewhere were opened, and chapels were built in many places where the persecuted flock had not been able to meet for worship except under the canopy of heaven.<sup>(3)</sup>

(2) This Act provided that those who objected to oaths were simply to subscribe a declaration of fidelity to the King and Queen, together with a declaration of their religious belief in the words as follow:—"I, A. B., profess faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ his eternal Son, the true God, and in the Holy Spirit, one God blessed for evermore; and do acknowledge the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be given by divine inspiration."

(3) To give the work a more permanent character, and to extend the influence of nonconformity, a union between the Presbyterian and Independent ministers was formed in London. It was resolved that certain Heads of Agreement should be drawn up, and that the ministers should henceforth be called by the name of "The United Ministers." In Cheshire a similar association was formed, of which Samuel Angier was one of the most influential members. "The Heads of Agreement" framed by the London Union, were adopted by the brethren in Cheshire. "Their first meeting was held at Macclesfield, in March, 1690-1, and the minutes of their meetings continue down to September 3rd, 1745. The MS. book containing these minutes is entitled 'Some short Accounts or brief Hints of all Questions proposed, cases discussed, determinations made, and other occurrences, at the several meetings of ye Cheshire Ministers, held in that County.' Concerning a meeting held at the house of one Mr. Bush some time immediately subsequent to April 6th, 1691, we find the following record of business:—"Ye Agreement of ye London Ministers was deliberately read over, considered, and subscribed by all *mem. contrd.* in ye following form:—We, whose names are subscribed, have perused and considered the Heads of Agreement assented to by ye united Ministers in and about London, and doe blesse God for that mercy; and give our unfeigned assent to the same unanimously as the Lord shall enable to practice according to them." Among the signatures attached to this document we find the following, second in order—"Samuel Angier, Preacher of God's word at

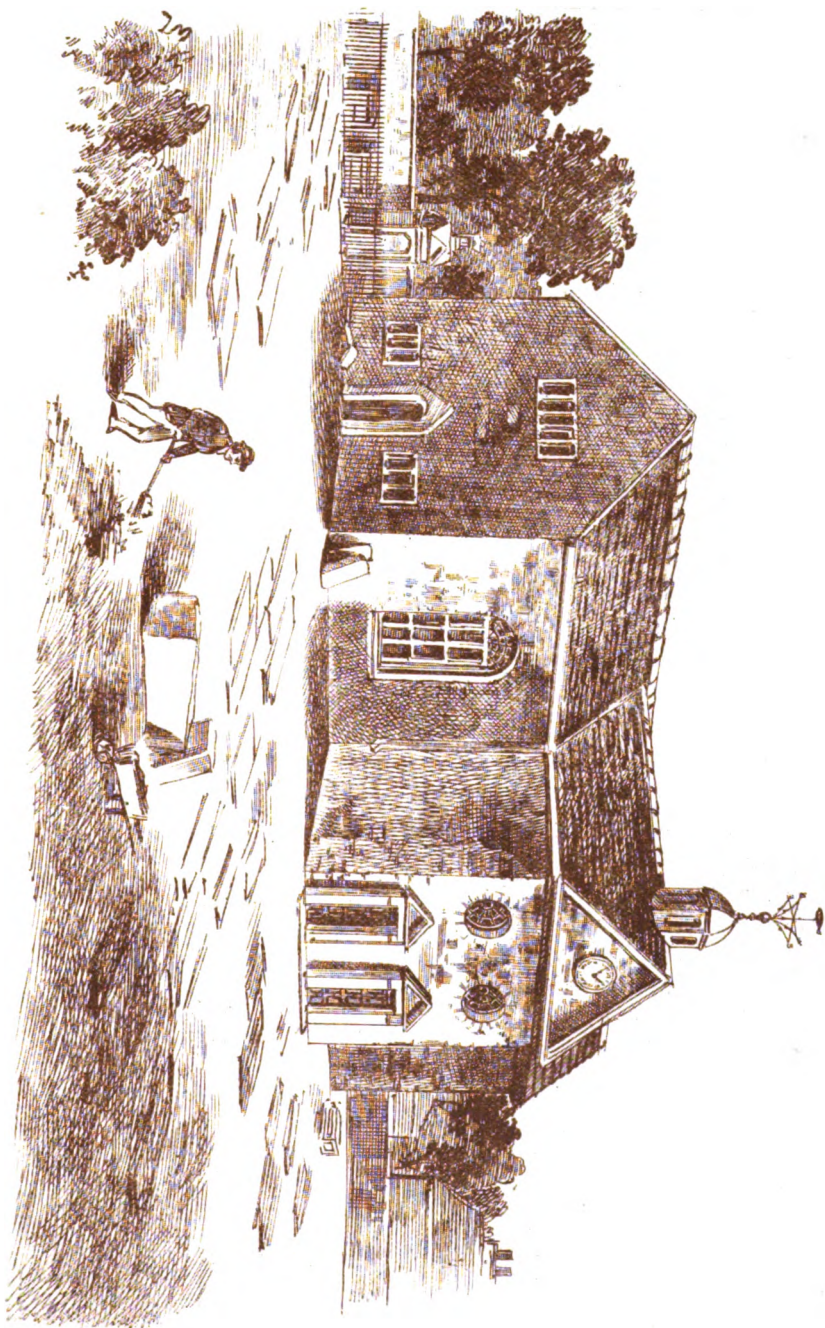


After upwards of twenty years of incessant labour in the old barn, Mr. Angier and his people began to think of something more in accordance with their religious taste than their old conventicle. The barn was too small, and, at the best, inconvenient. At length it was determined to build a chapel. A very beautiful and commanding site was selected on the hill, probably not far from the shady nook in the "oaken thicket," hallowed by the memory of many a precious blessing received from heaven in the hard days of persecution, and sanctified by many a pleasing reflection. The land and the greatest part of the materials were given, free of expense, by Sir Robert Dukinfield. The tenure of the land was a lease for three lives—a very inexpedient kind of tenure for a changing body like a dissenting congregation. The following is an abstract of the original grant:—

"This Indenture made 4th Aprill, 1707, betweene Sir Robert Dukinfield, of Dukinfield, Co. Chester, Bart., of the one part, Robert Dukinfield, of Manchester, gent., Samuel Leigh, of Dukinfield, yeoman, James Beswick, of Dukinfield, tailor, John Kenworthy, of Staley, and Thomas Turner, of Godley, yeoman, John Thorniley, of Hyde, yeoman, John Wright, Joshua Tayler, and William Walker, son of John Walker, all of Ashton-under-Lyne, yeomen, of the other part, Witnesseth that the said Robert Dukinfield hath demised to the said Robert Dukinfield, &c., all that plot of land lying near Hall Green in Dukinfield, together with the chappell or meeting place, stables, structures, or any edifices or building which shall or may be erected thereupon, &c. To have and to hold in trust for and during the natural lives of Charles Dukinfield, of Macclesfield, Esq., John Dukinfield, of Bristol, merchant, and Robert Dukinfield, son of the said John Dukinfield, gent, to and for the only uses, intents, and purposes hereinafter menconed and expressed (*viz.*) when as the said intended chappell or meeting place shall be erected, built and lycensed

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Duckinfield." At a meeting held August 11th, 1691, six rules were drawn up, entitled, "Rules for the promoting of peace and unity among themselves and congregations for mutual edification." To this document Mr. Angier's name is also appended. These minutes were contained in a small MS. book at Knutsford. They extend from March, 1690-91 to September 3, 1745. The first part of the book, it is believed, is in the handwriting of Gamaliel Jones; a few pages on is the well-known MS. of Mathew Henry. (*Rev. R. B. Aspland*) Among the MSS. of the late Rev. Joseph Hunter, now in the British Museum Library, there is a very full abstract—in the early part, if not throughout, a verbatim copy—of this interesting document, entitled, "*An Abstract of a small 4to Volume*, lent me by my valued friend, the Rev. William Turner, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in July, 1827." It is an *original record*, and the volume is about one third written over. It was found in the vestry at Alldstock, in 1827. The MS. will be found in the British Museum *Collected Hunteriana*. Additional MSS. 24, 485. (*Unwick*.)



SAMUEL ANGIERS CHAPEL. DUKINFIELD.

then to and *for the use of a Protestant Presbyterian minister of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, dissenting from the Church of England*, and qualify'd, according to an Act of Parliament made in the first year of the reign of King William and Mary over England, &c., which said minister therein officiating and administering all the duties and ordinances that belong to that sacred function shall from time to time be called, elected, and *approved by the major part of the brethren who are* communicants of that congregation that there do usually attend. The annual rent to be *sixpence, if demanded.*" "With clauses for changes of lives, the election of new lessees, &c., and the appointment of John Bruckshaw, of Dukinfield, as the attorney on behalf of Sir Robert Dukinfield to deliver seisin of the said land. Signed by all the parties. The seals now destroyed. Endorsed." "Signed, sealed, and delivered in the presence of Nevill Hyde, Nathanael Duckenfield, John Scorer."<sup>(4)</sup>

The erection of this chapel was commenced in 1707, and was formally opened on the 19th of August, 1708, when the following entry was made in the register:—

"This day the first sermon in the New Chappell was preached, being a thanksgiving day for the victory near Oudenard, &c."

It was not, however, used for regular service until the 29th of the same month, when another entry was made to the following effect:—

"August 29th. This was the first Lord's Day of meeting at the New Chappell for the worship of God."

Referring to the character of Samuel Angier, the Rev. R. B. Aspland says:—

"He was not only a close student and a faithful pastor, but he also took a very active share in the proceedings of the United Presbyterians of this country. Subsequently to 1690 there were frequent meetings held, often at Knutsford, for conference respecting the state of the churches, for examining candidates for the ministry, and ordaining such as were approved. At these meetings Mr. Angier was generally present, and there is evidence of the reverence in which his character was held by his brethren in the county, that he was on no less than twelve different occasions appointed to be the Moderator of the Assembly. He survived the completion of the Old Chapel only [five] years, and died, full of years and honour, November 8, 1713. Some of the incidents of his life and a tribute to his character are inscribed in the minutes of the Cheshire ministers. He is described as 'a burning and a shining

(4.) *East Cheshire*, J. P. Earwaker, M.A., F.S.A., vol. ii. pp. 35-36.

light." Calamy says of him: "He was an excellent scholar, and retained much of his school learning. He was a very judicious and lively preacher, and a zealous asserter of the doctrine of free grace. He was an eminent Christian, and zealous of good works; much in prayer, and very particular in praying for his friends and neighbours, especially in affliction. When his sight failed him, he frequently entertained himself by repeating the greater part of David's Psalms and Paul's Epistles. He was all his days a close student, a great valuer of Bible knowledge, an exact preacher, and one who lived as he spoke and spoke as he lived. He was fully satisfied with his non-conformity to the last. Being requested to draw up an account of his ejection and sufferings, his answer was, the ill-treatment he had met with would only blacken the characters of some who were dead and gone, and be very offensive to some who were living, and he was for dropping the account of it.<sup>(5)</sup>

The last entry in the Old Chapel register, which is in another hand-writing, is to the effect that—

"Mr. Angier was ceased [seized] with his last sickness in the morning between nine and ten of the clock, and died the day following [following], a quarter of an ouer 6 a knight. Mr. Angier died November ye 8, was buried (in the Old Chapel yard) Nov. 11, 1713, in the 75th [74] year of his age."

On his tomb, on the south side of the present chapel, is the following Latin inscription:—

Hic requiescit in Domino  
 S A M U E L A N G I E R,  
 Jesu Christi Minister  
 Vir primævæ Pietatis et omni Virtute præclarus  
 Dedhamiæ in Comitatu Essexiæ  
 Pii et honestis Parentibus  
 Natus Octobris 28, 1639.  
 Westmonasteriensis Scholæ deinde Ædis Christi Oxon  
 Alumnus Reginus  
 Concionator Egregius et Assiduus  
 Continuis Evangelii Laboribus et Morbis  
 Fere obrutus,  
 Lumine etiam, ingravescente Ætate, orbatus  
 Tandem animam placide  
 Deo reddidit  
 8vo Novembris Anno Salutis  
 MDCCXIII  
 Ætatis LXXV.  
 In perpetuam Pietatis Memoriam  
 Bazaleel et Johannes Filii Sui.  
 H.M.P.C.

(5.) Mr. William Hampson, in a paper on the Old Chapel, Dukinfield, written in 1823, says:—  
 "An interleaved Bible purchased by him when a student at Christ Church, Oxford, in 3 vols. 4to., and dated 1662, is in the possession of the present writer. It is scarcely necessary to remark that it is enriched by notes and classical references in the course of frequent perusal down to the period of 1697. It exhibits its first possessor as a pious and diligent peruser, a candid inquirer, and a learned and critical annotator of the Holy Scriptures." *Monthly Repository*, vol. 18, o. s., p. 682.

## RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENCY.

Rev. William Buckley—Mr. Walker—Preaching Room in Ashton—Refuge—  
 Rev. Jonathan Sutcliffe, F.S.A.—Albion—Presentation to Mr. Sutcliffe  
 —Death of Mr. Sutcliffe—Rev. J. G. Rogers—Albion Schools—The Rev.  
 John Hutchison—Churches and Missions, &c.

THE popularity of Mr. Angier drew around him numbers of men who differed from each other very widely on questions of Church Polity. The Church was in its origin really Presbyterian, but it embraced many Independents, the remnant of those who had once met in the old Oratory, at the Old Hall, under the pastorate of Samuel Eaton. However much they were disposed to disagree on matters of polity, they were strongly united in loving their devout and Godly minister, and “For the sake of the admirable teaching of Mr. Angier, and the fellowship of kindred souls, they were willing to forget the narrow Ecclesiastical fences which separated Presbyterian and Independent.”<sup>(1)</sup> Mr. Angier’s successor was the William Buckley who held the pastorate for nearly forty years, and died on the 26th May, 1752.<sup>(2)</sup> “It is believed that during his time the Chapel at Dukinfield was more flourishing, with respect to numbers and piety, than it has ever been since. Aged persons who heard him when they were children inform us that it was necessary to go an hour before the commencement of the service in order to obtain admission, and that many attended from a distance of eight or ten miles.”<sup>(3)</sup>

Dissensions unfortunately arose after his death, and pastors one after another came and went, disheartened and disappointed. “The roll of ministers elected here, in a very few years, contains the names of Robinson, Stopford, Burgess, Helme, and Gladstone.”<sup>(4)</sup> At length, in 1762, William Buckley, son of their former

(1).—*Half a Century of Independency in Ashton-under-Lyne*, by Rev. J. Hutchison.

(2).—*Hist. of Nonconformity in Dukinfield*, by Rev. R. B. Aspland, M.A. See *Christian Reformer*, new series, vol. i., p. 754.

(3).—*MSS. Church Book*, kept by Rev. J. Sutcliffe, F.S.A.

(4).—*Hist. of Noncon.*, Aspland.

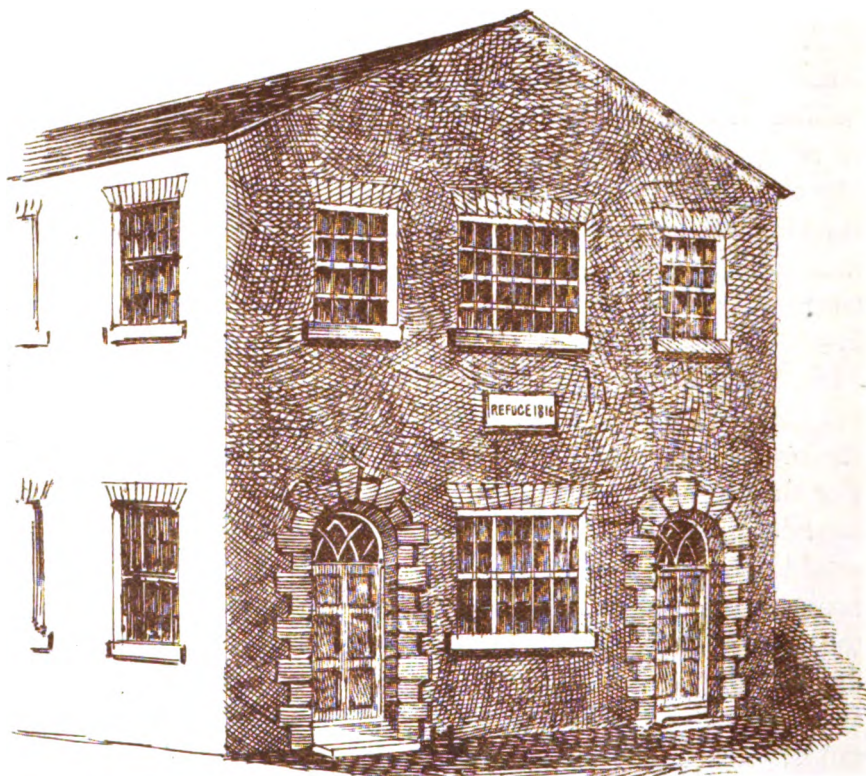
pastor, was unanimously called to take the pastoral oversight of the church. As to the result of his ministry there are two different records. Some say that the dissension now reached a climax, and a split ensued, the Independents seceding. Others tell us that the strife was healed, and that Buckley held the charge for nearly thirty years.<sup>(5)</sup>

There is considerable difficulty in ascertaining the real cause of the discontent, but as it is admitted, even by the friends of Mr. Buckley, Junr., that he was an Arian, and there is the greatest probability that it was his heterodoxy which led certain Independents to resign their connection with the communion at Chapel Hill. Hence, says the Rev. John Hutchison:—"Soon after the younger Buckley was settled as their minister, the people began to feel the want in his teaching of the clear and firm utterance of Gospel truth, which they had been accustomed to hear from his father's lips. The son had been educated at Daventry Academy, and came home at the close of his College course not only an Arian, but also a clerical dandy. This latter proclivity tended to widen the breach between him and a large number of his congregation. For the truly religious of that age, though they had unbounded confidence in truth, possessed very little faith in garments, and would not be convinced that the art of the milliner or tailor could promote the interests either of instruction or devotion. At length the dissatisfaction grew into pronounced opposition to the minister. The people endeavoured to induce him to preach a firmer faith, and failed. They also tried to eject him from the pulpit, and failed. The Church property had been erected and partly endowed for the preaching of what its founders believed to be an orthodox faith, but they could get no redress, except such as might be

(5.)—Aspland says "The dissensions of the flock were at length healed by the unanimous choice of Mr. William Buckley, son of their former revered pastor. . . . The older inhabitants of our village remember him, and love to speak of his simplicity of manner, his unaffected kindness to all, and the unimpeachable respectability of his character. His opinions were Arian, but like many of the ministers of his day and school, he seldom discussed in his pulpit disputed Theological topics." *Hist. of Noncon., &c.*, Aspland. See *Christian Reformer*, new series, vol. i., p. 755. The Rev. Jonathan Sutcliffe says "On the induction of his (Mr. Buckley, senr.) son, the Rev. William Buckley, junr., who had studied at Daventry Academy, a man of very slender abilities, and an Arian, the pious part of the congregation expressed considerable dissatisfaction."—MSS. *Church Book*.



obtained by their leaving the fellowship of the Church.”<sup>(6)</sup> Those who seceded met for worship in the house belonging to a person named Walker, one of the trustees of the Dukinfield Chapel, and leader in the opposition to Mr. Buckley.<sup>(7)</sup> Thus the second Independent Church in this district was commenced.



*The Refuge, Albion Street (first Albion Chapel).*

The Rev. Jonathan Sutcliffe, at the re-opening of the Refuge Independent Chapel, Ashton-under-Lyne, August 5th, 1827, gave

(6.)—*Half a Century of Independency in Ashton-under-Lyne*, p. 7.

(7.)—On one occasion when Mr. Buckley was about to ascend the pulpit Mr. Walker met him in the passage, and pointing with his walking stick to the minister's dress, exclaimed aloud, "Where silk gowns and powdered wigs come, there cometh no gospel."—See *Half Century of Independency, &c.*, p. 8.

a most interesting account of the growth of the Church from its beginning to that time, from which we insert the following quotation.

Speaking of the "pious persons," who assembled in Walker's house, he says:—

"Here they had preaching on the Sabbath evening by the Rev. Timothy Priestly, of Manchester, the Rev. W. Moorhouse, of Huddersfield, and others. How long preaching was continued cannot now be ascertained. The attendance was considerable; and it is stated that several of their descendants are now regular hearers at this place. Preaching was discontinued from the failure of supplies; the congregation was dispersed, and the people were obliged to travel five or seven miles every Sabbath to enjoy the preaching they most valued. But the good seed had not been sown in vain. Many longed to make another effort to establish a cause. Accordingly in the year 1795 (or 94) exertions were commenced on a larger scale; and a room in Mr. Oldham's factory, in Peaceable Street (now Fleet Street), capable of accommodating 400 persons, was opened for public worship. The attendance was good, and the prospects encouraging; and had there been a few persons of property and influence among them to sanction the erection of a chapel, there is a strong probability that the interest would then have been fully established; but the people were all of the working class; and owing to some unhappy contentions among them for pre-eminence, the design was relinquished, and preaching was discontinued, after having been kept up for five or six years. Still, the people have never to this day been entirely disbanded. They continued to assemble occasionally in Ashton and Dukinfield. In the year 1805 Mr. Marsh, then residing in the latter place, commenced preaching every Sabbath evening in a dwelling-house. The Independent Chapel (Providence) was soon afterwards [1806] erected, where it was expected that those who had been accustomed to assemble at Ashton might conveniently meet for public worship.<sup>(8.)</sup> This desertion of a large and rapidly increasing population seemed, to many, an unwise procedure. Neighbouring ministers and churches felt deeply interested in the state of this town. Accordingly in the year 1815, the cause was re-commenced under the auspices of the Lancashire Union. A few persons of piety and influence fitted up a room for public worship. The attendance for some time was small, frequently not amounting to twenty persons in the morning; but these continuing united, meeting for prayer, and being encouraged by the ministers of the Manchester

(8.)—On the opening of the Providence Chapel most of the Independents who still continued to meet in private houses in Ashton joined the young and flourishing church on the other side of the river. But this, instead of extinguishing the feeble cause of the Borough, seems to have put new life into it.—*Half a Century of Independency, &c.*, p. 11.



district of the County Union,<sup>(9)</sup> they gradually gained strength, and many will have to bless God in time and through eternity that those ministers ever visited this town. The regular increase<sup>(10)</sup> of the congregation encouraged them to attempt the erection of a chapel. Opposition to the principles of Dissent occasioned much difficulty in obtaining an eligible plot of ground for the purpose. The Earl of Stamford and Warrington (Lord of the Manor of Ashton), on being applied to for land, declared that no dissenting chapel should ever be erected on his ground, and from that time caused a clause to be inserted in all his leases to that effect.<sup>(11)</sup> At length, however, the plot on which we are now assembled, said Mr. Sutcliffe, and *which had been reserved by Divine Providence for the purpose*, was purchased, and the chapel erected at the cost of £1,000.<sup>(12)</sup> The principal instrument in the erection

- (9.)—When unable to obtain the services of ordained ministers, a few combined to keep up regular preaching, and they seem to have rendered this service with great credit to themselves, and with no small advantage to the struggling church. The principal share of this work fell to the late Mr. James Lord, long a devoted and valued friend of Independency in Ashton.—*Half Century of Independency, &c.*, p. 11.
- (10.)—By this time Mr. Marsh removed from Dukinfield to Manchester, and his successor in the pastorate of Providence Chapel was the Rev. [Thomas] Bennet. Between him and his people a difference arose upon a question of church discipline, and fourteen members left Providence Chapel, crossed the river, and united themselves to the small band of resolute Independents in Ashton. Among those who at this time came from the Dukinfield church was the late Mr. Nathaniel Buckley, whose elevated character and practical sagacity, whose genial spirit and great liberality could not fail to be of immense service to any movement with which he stood identified.—*Half Century of Independency, &c.*, p. 12.
- (11.)—Baffled in their endeavours to obtain an eligible situation for their religious home, the church had recourse to an obscure and unsightly building, turning out to the left off Crickets Lane. There the old building stands to this hour, with its quaint inscription, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Come and see." . . . Within it what is called the Albion Independent Church held, in 1816, its first Communion.—*Half a Century of Independency, &c.*, p. 13.
- (12.)—In perusing the MSS. Book, called *The Church Book*, we observe the following entries, which have been made by the Rev. Jonathan Sutcliffe:—"The Ordinance of the Lord's Supper was first administered to about twenty-five persons, whose names follow, and who met for regular worship in a room at Ashton-under-Lyne, in the year 1816." Then follows the roll of membership, the first twenty-seven names of which are, 1, Nathaniel Buckley, Carr Hill.—2, Betty Buckley, Carr Hill. Mrs. Buckley died July 22nd, 1843, in the 71st year of her age. Her funeral sermon preached by J. Sutcliffe, August 6th, from Phil. iii. 8, 9. Mr. Buckley died Jan. 10th, 1845, in his 81st year. His funeral sermon preached by Rev. R. Fletcher, of Manchester, Jan. 26th, Job v. 26.—3, James Smith, Dukinfield Nursery.—4, Mary Smith, Dukinfield Nursery. James Smith withdrawn—the unpleasant business concluded at the Church Meeting, Aug. 31st. 1821. Mrs. Smith left at the same time; died at Flixton, Oct. 1825.—5, Robert Heap, Ashton.—6, Mary Heap, Ashton. Mr. Heap died suddenly, July 16th, 1824. Mrs. Heap died suddenly, April 1st, 1827.—7, Edmund Spencer (deacon), Ashton.—8, Ann Spencer, Ashton. Mrs. Spencer died June 17th, 1848, aged 57. Funeral sermon preached by J. S., July 2nd, from 2 Cor. v. 1. In another hand-writing—Mr. Spencer died August 11th 1851. His funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. J. G. Rogers on the 24th August, from Luke xx. 36. He died in the sixty-second year of his age, at which time he was senior deacon.—9, William Thompson, Ashton.—10, Mary Thompson, Ashton. William Thompson withdrawn Aug. 31st, 1821, died Dec. 1837, aged 65. Mary Thompson, died 1833.—11, David Davies, Ashton. Died Dec. 23rd, 1842, in the 86th year of his age. Funeral sermon preached by J. Sutcliffe, January 8th, 1843, from Job v. 26.—12, Thomas Plant, Ashton, died on the 29th of the following month. The minister visited him the day before his death, and found him deeply concerned and apparently penitent.

and continued 'support of this place of worship, and whose name,' piety, and distinguished liberality are entitled to a record in this place, was Nathaniel Buckley, Esquire.<sup>(13)</sup> The chapel was opened on the 8th of April, 1817.<sup>(14)</sup> Then many hearts were gladdened and many tongues sang the praises of Jehovah. The midsummer following [1817] application was made to the present minister [Rev. Jonathan Sutcliffe], then a student of Airedale College, Yorkshire, to supply the pulpit during the recess. The prospects at that time were, on the whole, of an encouraging nature, the regular congregations amounting to 50 persons in the morning and nearly 200 in the afternoon. Mr. Sutcliffe received from the people a unanimous invitation to settle among them, which after due deliberation he accepted, and commenced his stated labours in January, 1818, and was ordained to the pastoral office the following May.<sup>(15)</sup> Considerable accessions continued to be made to the church and congregation. A vestry and rooms for a Sunday school were erected,

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—13, Edmund Whitehead, Newton.—14, Alice Whitehead, Newton. Edmund died July, 1833. Alice died June, 1839.—15, Robert Higson, Hurst.—16, Betty Higson, Hurst. Robert Higson resigned and withdrew Aug. 4th, 1842.—Town Missionary, Manchester, died Aug., 1849, aged—. Funeral sermon preached by J. S., Sep. 2nd, from Prov. xiv. 32.—17, Abraham Marsden, Hurst.—18, Martha Marsden, Hurst. Abraham died 13th Dec., 1837, aged 76 years. Martha died Dec. 6th, 1843, aged 78 years.—19, John Thorpe, Hurst.—20, Ann Thorpe, Hurst. John died June 25th, 1825. A poor man and a most exemplary Christian. His funeral sermon preached on Lord's day, July 10th, from Ps. xxxiv. 6. Ann Thorpe died April 20th, 1851, aged 77.—21, Samuel Bottomley, Hurst.—22, James Wrigley, Hurst. Died Oct. 30th, 1821. Death improved 4th Nov., from Mark xi. 37.—23, Sarah Bottomley, Ashton. Re-admitted Oct. 2nd, 1828.—24, Martha France, Ashton. Died Sep. 11th, in the 69th year of her age, 1842. Her funeral sermon preached by J. Sutcliffe, on Lord's day morning, the 25th, from Psalm ciii. 2.—25, Etty Cox, Ashton. Died Sep. 21st, 1847, aged 69.—Jonathan Andrew, Hurst. Died May 23, 1848.—27, Mary Smith, Dukinfield Nursery. Left England for Africa, Sep. 8, 1819. Arrived at the Cape 6th of December following. Was married to the Rev. R. Moffat, Missionary at Lattakoo.

- (13.)—It was soon found to be impossible to cram all who came to worship within the four walls of this small room, and the erection of a chapel became a necessity. . . . At length that which could not be got on his lordship's territory, was procured in an Alley (now Albion Street), off Crickets Lane, and the foundation-stone of Refuge Chapel was laid in 1816.—See *Half Century of Independency, &c.*, p. 14.
- (14.)—The new chapel (Refuge) was opened for public worship in April, 1817, when the Rev. Wm. Roby, of Manchester; the Rev. Samuel Bradley, of Manchester; and the Rev. J. Ely, of Rochdale, preached appropriate sermons.—*MSS. Book, kept by Rev. J. Sutcliffe.*
- (15.)—His pastor, the Rev. J. Scott, of Cleckheaton, and his tutor, the Rev. W. Vint, of Idle, along with other ministers, took part in his ordination services.—*Half Century of Independency, &c.*, p. 15. Shortly after the settlement of Mr. Sutcliffe, a covenant was formed among the members of the church, and given effect to in the following words:—"We, who have been convinced of our fallen state, of the depravity of our natures and the transgressions of our lives; and having, we trust, been brought to a knowledge and enjoyment of saving mercy through Jesus Christ, do solemnly give up ourselves to the Lord and to one another, that we may walk together in the devout observances of the Divine ordinance, institutions, and commands. Trusting in the Lord for His gracious assistance, we solemnly engage to seek each other's good, to pray for each other's welfare, to exercise mutual forbearance and Christian love; to exhort and reprove with meekness and impartiality, to do all in our power to maintain the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace, and to seek the prosperity and advancement of our Redeemer's name at home and abroad."

which cost £200.<sup>(16)</sup> The debt on the chapel had been considerably reduced ; still the people felt anxious to be relieved from the burden altogether. For this purpose, on Lord's day, 16th February, 1823, the congregations being at that time in a flourishing state, two sermons were preached by the Rev. W. Vint, and the collections made, which (including the liberal donations of several individuals received at the time) amounted to the sum of £530, by which the chapel was completely cleared. From that time to the present (1827) there has been a gradual strengthening of the cause, and though we have not been without painful trials and discouragements incident to all Christian societies in a militant state, and which have often caused our hands to hang down ; yet on reviewing the past, we have great cause to 'thank God and take courage.' We have been blessed with greater prosperity than the most sanguine, at one time, ventured to anticipate. . . Since the commencement we have received 176 members, and were we anxious to swell our numbers it would be an easy matter to add many more to our list ; but we would ever be conscious that it is not the numbers but the piety of members that constitutes prosperity of a church. For some time past our friends have found a difficulty in providing persons with pews. Soon after last Christmas (1826) this difficulty began to be very seriously felt. The pews were all let, and there were many applications which could not be attended to. Accordingly the trustees and other friends met in the vestry on the 30th of April (1827), when it was concluded to enlarge the chapel and erect a new schoolroom. Subscriptions to a considerable amount were entered into at the time, which, being increased by the contributions of the people at large, reached about £500. The money was thus raised before the operations were commenced."

In another place Mr. Sutcliffe writes, concerning the Albion Chapel :—

"The former chapel (Refuge) being found insufficient, it was concluded by the church in 1833 to erect a new chapel on a large scale, provided an eligible plot of ground could be obtained for the purpose.<sup>(17)</sup> The Earl of

(16).—In 1820 the Sunday-school met in a room over a blacksmith's shop, in Crickets Lane, from which it may be inferred that it was neither too large nor too well accommodated. . . . . When the new building was opened the scholars on the books numbered about 300, and the same year the sum of £48 was collected for the support of the school. . . . . Four years after, Refuge Chapel, which held 400, became too small for the congregation. New schools were erected, and the original schoolroom was added to the chapel, which was thereby so enlarged as to afford space for 620 sittings. It was re-opened on the 20th August, 1827.—See *Half a Century of Independency, &c.*, pp. 17, 18.

(17).—This movement for a larger chapel originated mainly with the teachers in the Sunday-school and the Deacons of the Church. . . . The teachers drew up a statement, setting forth the necessity of chapel accommodation for the senior scholars. It is dated 26th January, 1833, and is signed, in the name of all, by eleven teachers who formed the School Committee. The names of seven deacons are added to a note, which affirms that they cordially join in the requisition, and urgently press it on the church.—*Half a Century of Independency, &c.*, p. 23.

Stamford having refused their former application, declaring that no dissenting chapel should be built on his land, had caused a clause to be inserted in all his leases to that effect. Application was again made to his Lordship,<sup>(18)</sup> which it was hoped would, in this age of liberty, be successful; but it was again met with the most determined refusal. Several spirited letters, headed 'Lord Stamford and the Dissenters of Ashton-under-Lyne,' were published in the *Manchester Times*, signed 'Mancuniensis' (Geo. Hadfield, Esq.), which excited the greatest interest in the neighbourhood, and some of which were copied by the London papers. Among other things it was stated in the *Manchester Times* that: 'Dissenters of Ashton-under-Lyne are a numerous and respected body of people, and not a few of them are among the best tenants on his Lordship's domain. It is with a bad grace that Lord Stamford tries to check the progress of free and voluntary religious instruction in the Denomination alluded to, which without ostentation, and without any burden to the town, is now accomplishing an amount of good which it is refreshing to a patriotic and Christian mind to contemplate. The present chapel, after having been repeatedly enlarged, is overflowing; and hundreds more would attend that excellent and laborious minister, could they be accommodated with sitting room; but Lord Stamford considers it a nuisance for his tenantry to worship God publicly upon his Manor. Ignorance, vice, debauchery, and all manner of iniquity may reign and not with unbridled licentiousness; but none of the 'balm of Gilead,' no heavenly 'physician' may come within my Lord's domains. The Rector of the Parish, his lordship's relative, with £1,200 a year, a pluralist and non-resident, joins in the attempt to put down Dissent, and the Bishop of Chester approves, &c., &c.' Thus disappointed and thwarted, the people next applied to the Rev. George Chetwode, Rector, for permission to extend their present chapel (Refuge) a few yards on the adjoining plot of ground, which they held in lease from the said Rector, but this request was also refused; and as the lease by which they held this property contained the same prohibitory clause as to Dissenting chapels as that introduced into the leases of Lord Stamford, it was not considered advisable or safe to proceed. Early in the year 1834 it was agreed to purchase a number of cottages near the present chapel,<sup>(19)</sup> and to erect a new and large chapel on the site; the only ground to be obtained in the town exempt from the objectionable clause. This purchase was effected for about £500, and was conveyed to Mr. Samuel B. Tomlins, banker, Ashton, one of the members of the

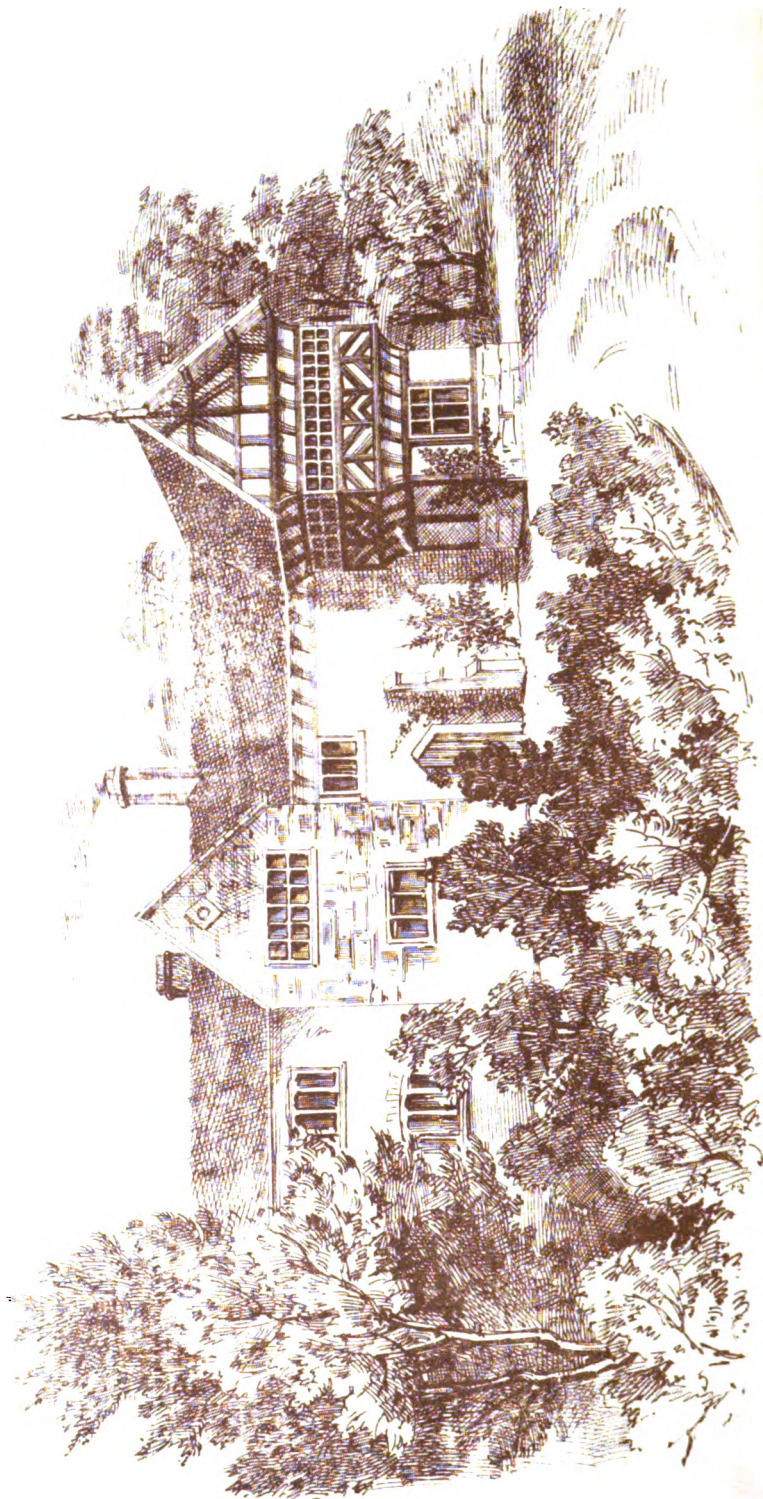
(18).—This time a deputation from the church waited personally upon the Earl of Stamford, but they were met by the most determined refusal.—*Half a Century of Independency, &c.*

(19).—A group of freehold cottages, near the (Refuge) Chapel, but still close to the crooked and mysterious intricacies of Crickets Lane. . . . Some years after a new street (now Albion) was opened from Crickety to Sugar Lane, and the extension of Catherine Street to the east has greatly improved the neighbourhood.—*Half a Century of Independency, &c.*, p. 23.

church, for the Trustees. The ceremony of laying the foundation-stone was performed, amidst a large concourse of people, on Friday, the 23rd of May, 1834. The following, written on parchment, and placed in a leaden box, was deposited in the foundation-stone :—"Consecrated to the Worship of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.—This chapel was erected for the accommodation of the church and congregation of Protestant Dissenters of the Independent or Congregational Order at Ashton-under-Lyne, in the County of Lancaster, having been preceded by a chapel of smaller dimensions on an adjoining plot of ground, which was erected A.D. 1816, and enlarged A.D. 1827. The first stone of this new and large edifice was laid by Nathaniel Buckley, Esq, senior deacon of the church, on the 23rd day of May, in the fourth year of the reign of William the Fourth, 1834. Hymns were sung by the assembly, and prayers offered up by several members of the church, after which an address, appropriate to the occasion, was delivered by the Rev. J. Sutcliffe. Present on the day the foundation-stone was laid—the Rev. Jonathan Sutcliffe, pastor; Nathaniel Buckley, Robert Higson, Edmund Spencer, James Bradbury, Benjamin Goldthorp, and James Hyde, deacons of the church; the Rev. James Buckley, member. The trustees and gentlemen constituting the Committee—Abel Buckley, John Cheetham, James Lord, Joseph Buckley, Frederick Reyner, Samuel B. Tomlins, William Swindell, James Buckley, William Sunderland, Edward Redfern, John Knott, Abraham Ogden, and James France. The members of the church, being about 180 persons; a large concourse of people, principally members of the congregation; the children belonging to the Sunday school, being about 1,100; the teachers of the school, 136; the superintendents—Andrew Robinson, John Knott, Joseph Mellor, and Joseph Garlick; the secretaries; Joseph Higginbottom, attorney, and Messrs. Lowe and Bake, architects. The estimated cost of the erection, £3,000,<sup>(20)</sup> the principal part of which was raised prior to the undertaking, by the voluntary contributions of the people.' Deposited in the stone, besides this parchment, a Declaration of the Faith, Church Order, and Discipline of the Congregational Dissenters, and a Historical Sketch of the rise and progress of Independency in the Borough of Ashton-under-Lyne and neighbourhood. 'Let Thy work appear unto Thy servant, and Thy glory unto their children; and let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it.'—Amen. Gloria Deo." On March 29th, 1835, a valedictory sermon was preached on leaving the old [Refuge] chapel by the Rev. J. Sutcliffe, from John xiv. 31, 'Arise, let us go hence,' after which the following resolution, proposed by Mr. Samuel Tomlins, and put to the assembly by Mr. N. Buckley, was unanimously carried: 'That as a church and congregation we remove from this place of worship to the adjoining new

(20.)—The entire cost amounted to £3,427 1s. 3d.





HYDE HALL IN DENTON







chapel, called Albion Chapel, the Pastor to the pulpit and the people to the pews.' "(21)

On the following Sunday, April the 5th, 1835, the congregation met for the first time in the new chapel, when three sermons were preached by the Rev. J. Sutcliffe; the sacrament of the Lord's Supper being administered in the afternoon of the same day.<sup>(22)</sup> The formal opening of the sanctuary took place on the 10th of May, when the Rev. Thomas Raffles, D.D., LL.D., of Liverpool, preached in the morning and evening, and the Pastor in the afternoon. The opening services were continued on the Wednesday evening following, when the Rev. R. S. McAll, LL.D., of Manchester, preached. "The collections at the united services amounted to £367 4s. 9d. The total cost of the erection, including the purchase of premises, &c., was £3,427 1s. 3d., towards which the people subscribed among themselves, at the commencement of the undertaking, £2,595 11s. 0d.; which, added to the collections, left a debt of only £464 5s. 6d." This debt was augmented during the first year, so that at the anniversary of the opening they found themselves with an adverse balance of £664 17s. 4d. The result of the collections at the anniversary sermons, which were preached by the Rev. James Parsons, of York, was as follows:—Collected in the morning: £49 10s. in gold, £230 in notes and cheques, £30 13s. in silver, and £1 1s. 9d. in copper; making a total for the morning of £311 4s. 9d. Collected in the evening: £272 13s. 1d.—Making the very handsome total for the two services of £583 17s. 10d. Having so far succeeded, subscriptions were immediately forthcoming, and the debt was at once extinguished.

In the *Christian Witness* for February, 1850, there is an account of a very interesting meeting. On Tuesday evening, January 8th, 1850, Mr. Sutcliffe and his family were invited to a tea party, held in the schoolroom. After tea, Abel Buckley, Esq.

(21.) MS. *Church Book*.

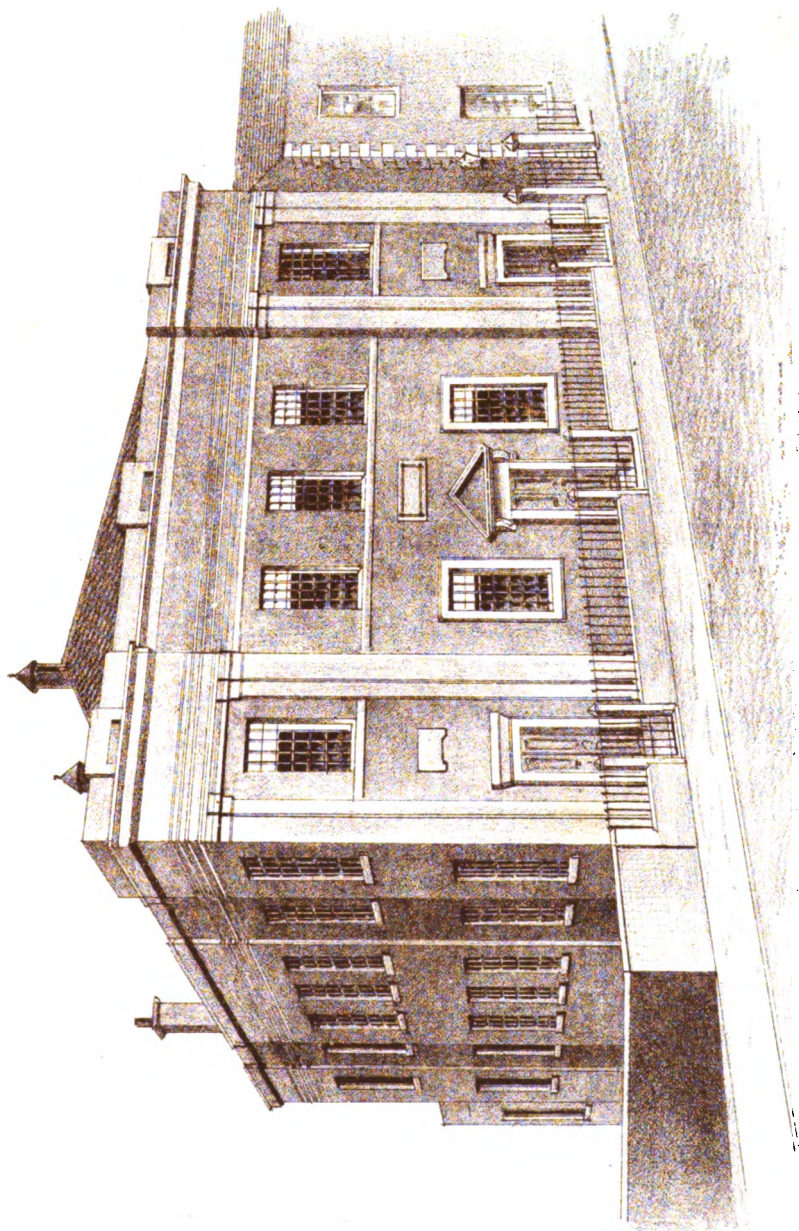
(22.) In the MS. *Church Book* is the following entry: "April 5th, entered Albion Chapel this day, when the sermons were preached by J. Sutcliffe; in the morning from Haggai, ii ch. 9 v., in the afternoon, I Cor., ii ch. 2 v., and in the evening from 11. Tim., i ch. 8 v. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered in the afternoon."

A—IX.

(the late Mayor of the Borough), occupied the chair. During the evening John Cheetham, Esq., M.P., presented Mr. Sutcliffe with a purse of gold containing £1,000, and a fine copy of the Oxford demy folio Bible, valued at thirty guineas, bound in the most handsome style, with bevelled boards, gilt clasps, and chased gilt mountings on the side, superbly embossed, gilt antique edges, gold bullion tassels, and illuminated vellum presentation leaf, containing the following inscription:—"Presented to the Rev. Jonathan Sutcliffe, F.S.A., Minister of Albion Chapel, Ashton-under-Lyne, with a purse containing £1,000, by the undernamed Members of the Church and Congregation, in testimony of the high esteem in which they held his services as their first and only pastor, and a token of the affectionate remembrance with which they commemorate the entrance of his thirty-third year of his ministerial labour amongst them; accompanied by their fervent prayers that the Gospel he has for so lengthened a period faithfully and zealously proclaimed to others, and exemplified in his life, may be found his own rich consolation and support in his declining years, and uphold him through life's closing scene, till faith be lost in sight, and the toils and labours of earth be exchanged for the rest and happiness of heaven.—Jan. 8th, 1850."

On the 25th of May, that same year, Mr. Sutcliffe resigned the pastorate of Albion Church, and preached his farewell sermon on the 29th June following. For several months he rested, but finding a life of inactivity uncongenial he accepted the pastoral oversight of a small Church at Longsight. After four years' most successful labour, during which time the Church erected a most beautiful edifice at a cost of £5,000, and freed it of debt, his health again began to fail, consequently he resigned his charge once more and retired to Ashton, where he died on the 20th of April, 1859, most deeply lamented by many friends and admirers.

On the right hand side of the minister, as he stands in the pulpit, in the Albion Chapel, near the vestry door, is a tablet bearing the following inscription:—



ALBION CHAPEL.

"Sacred to the Memory of the Rev. Jonathan Sutcliffe, F.S.A., for more than thirty years the faithful and beloved Pastor of the Church assembling in this place of worship. His fervour in the closet, his earnestness in the pulpit, his greatness of attachment to Christian principle, his holy life and unwearied labours were crowned by the Divine blessing with extreme usefulness. His flock erected this tablet in gratitude for his services and in affection for his memory. He was born on the 31st December, 1794; ordained 25th May, 1818, and died 20th April, 1859. 'He was a good man, and full of faith and of the Holy Ghost.'"(23)

In 1851, the Rev. J. G. Rogers, B.A., of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, succeeded to the Pastorate of the Albion Church. He was publicly recognised in November of that same year, when a number of Ministers took part in the services, among whom were Dr. Halley, Dr. Vaughan, and Dr. Davidson. "Mr. Rogers entered upon his work in Ashton as pastor of a large and flourishing church, under circumstances of much promise and great encouragement. It was to his advantage that he had lived in Lancashire, and had been a student of the college in the County,"(24) for he knew the people well and was acquainted with their ways."(25)

During the fourteen years Mr. Rogers exercised his ministry at Albion Chapel, he gained for himself a deserved popularity, not only in Ashton, but throughout the whole County of Lancaster. Being an eloquent speaker, an able debater, and a

- (23.) Mr. Sutcliffe was also the means of forming Churches at the following places: HYDE (Union street), of which place he is reported to have said, "Here I found a small School-room, which had been erected by one of my Deacons, and in which there had been occasional preaching on Sunday evenings, but it had been shut up for two years. It was re-opened, and by-and-by we got preachers from Manchester; a grant of money was obtained from the County Union, a church was formed, and a considerable congregation gathered in 1822." STALYBRIDGE.—Here Mr. Sutcliffe had preached on week-nights from the year 1827. In 1831, a chapel was rented in King street, and a church formed of eleven members who had been transferred from Albion for that purpose. DENTON.—In the Spring of 1836 preaching was commenced at this place, and in the following Summer a chapel was built, the church being formed in the year 1837. RYECROFT (*in loco*). It is worthy of note, that during his pastorate the following members were called either to engage in ministerial work or to labour in the missionary field in foreign lands:—Mary Smith, married to Dr. Moffat; Rev. John Smith, minister of a church in Madras for fifteen years; Mr. James Buckley, for fourteen years minister at Stockport; Rev. S. B. Schofield, Rev. Geo. Schofield, Rev. Simpson Todd, Rev. Geo. Gladstone, Rev. W. Atherton, Rev. W. Ashton, Rev. J. Dewsnap, Rev. J. T. Shawcross, Rev. Simeon Dyson.
- (24.) Mr. Rogers was one of the Students at the Independent College, Blackburn, and was transferred to the Lancashire Independent College, Manchester, when that Institution was opened.

- (25.) *Half a Century of Independency, &c.*, p. 29.

powerful preacher, he drew around him many admirers, who thronged to Albion Chapel or to some of the Secular Halls in the town, in which he was wont to exercise his gift of oratory. Notwithstanding the frequent demands made upon him, he succeeded in "maintaining the position and extending the influence of his own Church," while "his ready powers of utterance and public spirit rendered him of great service to the cause of Nonconformity in the County." It was during his ministry that the Albion Schools were built, and Churches formed at Mossley,<sup>(26)</sup> Droylsden,<sup>(27)</sup> and Dukinfield.<sup>(28)</sup> In 1865, he received a call to take the oversight of the Church at Clapham, where he still continues to "exercise his gifts and attainments as pastor of one of the strongest and most influential Churches in the Metropolis."

Mr. Rogers was succeeded at Albion by the Rev. John Hutchison. In the Church Book, it is recorded that,

At a full meeting of the Church and Congregation after the Morning Service, on Sunday, 23rd July, 1865, it was unitedly and heartily agreed to call to the pastorate of the Church, Mr. John Hutchison, the Minister of the Independent Church, Dunfermline, Scotland. On the evening of the same day, at a meeting of the Church Members, the same resolution was adopted with the greatest unanimity and cordiality.

Mr. Hutchison accepted the invitation, and entered upon his labours on the first Sunday in October. His induction took place on the following Monday, October 2nd, 1865, when many Ministers and Laymen took part in the proceedings, among whom were the Revs. Dr. Thompson, Dr. Macfadyen, Dr. Alexander, Thomas Green, M.A., J. Medicraft (New Connexion); Messrs. Hugh

(26.) From the origin of the church in Ashton several members came regularly from Mossley, and through their efforts and those of their pastor, the Rev. J. G. Rogers, Evangelistic and Sunday School teaching had not been neglected in that village. In 1852, the foundation stone of Abney Chapel was laid by Mr. John Cheetham. M.P. There is now a flourishing church at this place.

(27.) Here Mr. Sutcliffe and members of the church began preaching in cottages, and in 1857 a church was formed, when 39 members were transferred from the Albion Church to form a separate society there. The foundation stone of the present building, which was enlarged in 1855, was laid in 1859, by Abel Buckley, Esq., of Alderdale. The present minister, the Rev. A. Cran, M.A., settled there in 1863.

(28.) In 1824, a branch school was started at Furnace Hill, Dukinfield. In 1860, sixty-four members transferred from Albion formed a church in this place. There are also flourishing Missions at Taunton, Hurst, and other places.

Mason, and S. B. Tomlins, &c.<sup>(29)</sup> During the ministry of Mr. Hutchison, this Church has maintained the numerous organizations in full vigour, while the various Mission Stations have been ably supported under his fostering care. The commodious Mission Chapel in Charlestown has been erected during his time, the foundation stone being laid in August, 1866, by Hugh Mason, Esq. It is situated in one of the most densely populated parts of the Borough. The building cost £1,500, and was opened, free of debt, in February, 1867. In addition to the religious services a day school is conducted in the building, under the energetic direction of Mr. John Hadfield, the head master.

It is now over twenty years since Mr. Hutchison first came to Ashton-under-Lyne, yet, notwithstanding the enormous demands made upon his strength, and overtures made to him by other large and influential churches,<sup>(30)</sup> he still continues to exercise his ministry with increasing acceptance. As a preacher he is thoughtful and vigorous, and by his pious disposition, his devout and earnest spirit, combined with an unblemished Christian character, he exerts a powerful influence for good upon those who attend his ministry, besides a large circle of friends.

(29.) *Half a Century of Independency, &c.*, p. 36.

(30.) On Thursday, July 2nd, 1868, Mr. Hutchison received an invitation to become the pastor of the Great George Street Church, Liverpool, where Dr. Raffles had ministered for half-a-century, and whose successor, Dr. Mellor, had returned to Halifax, causing the pulpit to become vacant once more. The apprehension of losing his services produced a general feeling of depression in Ashton, amongst his friends, and his decision was awaited with considerable anxiety. On Sunday, July 12th, Mr. Hutchison referred to the invitation in the following terms:—"Two gentlemen, from the Great George Street Chapel, Liverpool, have waited upon me during the past week to express the feeling of the Supply Committee, and to lay before me such considerations as they supposed might lead me favourably to entertain a call. But, I assure you, their representations of the great attractions of that church have not weakened my great and evergrowing attachment to my present flock, and they have in no way modified my conviction that is my duty to continue as your minister. I have, therefore, replied, that neither my judgment nor my affections permit me to entertain any proposals for leaving the church of which I have the honour to be the minister." This declaration was received with suppressed demonstrations of satisfaction and relief.

## ALBION SCHOOLS.

For some time prior to 1820 the Sunday school in connection with this church, met in a small room over a blacksmith's shop in Crickets Lane, but in consequence of the large influx of scholars it was found necessary to provide better accommodation. Consequently in 1822 a vestry and rooms for the Sunday school were erected behind the Refuge Chapel, at a cost of £200. These rooms were opened in the month of February, 1823, at which time the number of scholars on the books was about 300. Four years after the above date the Refuge Chapel became too small. New schools were therefore erected, and the old rooms added to the chapel. On March 29th, 1835, when the church moved into the new chapel in Albion Street, Refuge Chapel was set apart for the use of the scholars, and was for some years known as the Girls' School. So rapid was the growth of this school that in a few years it numbered not less than 1,000 scholars. In 1860 the teachers, feeling that they could no longer carry on their work with comfort to themselves or advantage to their scholars, addressed a letter to the Deacons, setting forth the "utter inadequacy of the existing accommodation, and asking for more."<sup>(31)</sup> Immediately the Pastor and Deacons "threw themselves into the work of the growing school," the people also responding with "large-hearted munificence," and on Good Friday, 1861, the foundation-stone of the New Albion Schools was

(31.) In this memorial it is stated that "During the past year the number of scholars in the Boy's School had increased from 280 to 350, and is still progressing. Nor is this the result of a momentary excitement merely, but as we trust and believe is an indication of the Divine blessing and presence in our midst. A spirit of harmony, union, and earnestness seems to animate the whole school. The classrooms have been over-crowded during the winter months; summer time is coming, and what shall we do? The superintendents have already crowded the vestry, and are compelled to put classes into the Chapel. It is an animating sight to witness many who, until recently, spent their Sabbaths in training dogs to fight or pigeons to fly, now occupied in the noble duty of studying the Word of God. Others are still waiting to join our classes; it is a subject of deep regret that any should be denied admission for want of room. Indeed, this cannot, must not be."—*Half a Century of Independency*, p. 31.



laid by Hugh Mason, Esq., then Mayor of the Borough,<sup>(32)</sup> and they were opened on Good Friday in the following year.<sup>(33)</sup> The buildings stand alone on a rising ground, and embrace an Assembly-room, capable of seating about 1,500 people; a Lecture-room or Amphitheatre, with seats for 500 persons; an Infant School, with rising seats for 200 scholars, and eleven spacious Classrooms. The whole length of the building is 150 feet, and the greatest breadth 80 feet. The external walls are faced with red brick, relieved with white fire-bricks. The building is Pseudo-Italian in style, crowned with pediments on different sides, and surmounted by a handsome tower which, as an "extraction shaft," carries off the foul air from within. The whole erection is admirably contrived to secure health and comfort both to teachers and scholars. The Assembly-room is elegantly decorated and contains a large organ. The other rooms are all furnished with equal care, especially the Amphitheatre. The total cost of this palatial pile was £11,000, of which sum no less than £1,300 were collected at the opening, which was during the Cotton Famine in Lancashire.<sup>(34)</sup> In connection with this school and its branches there are about 2,500 scholars and teachers, under the direction of three superintendents—Messrs. A. Park, J. Knight, and W. Bostock, who have held those positions for about thirteen years. There is also a Literary Society, which has been a considerable help both to the church and school. The old school rooms are now used for Working Men's Classes and Reading-rooms.

About seven years after the opening of these premises, the teachers conceived an idea that they would like the building to be utilized for purposes of secular education, and the school committee was petitioned to take the matter in hand, and to work out some scheme for carrying into effect this desire. The committee having

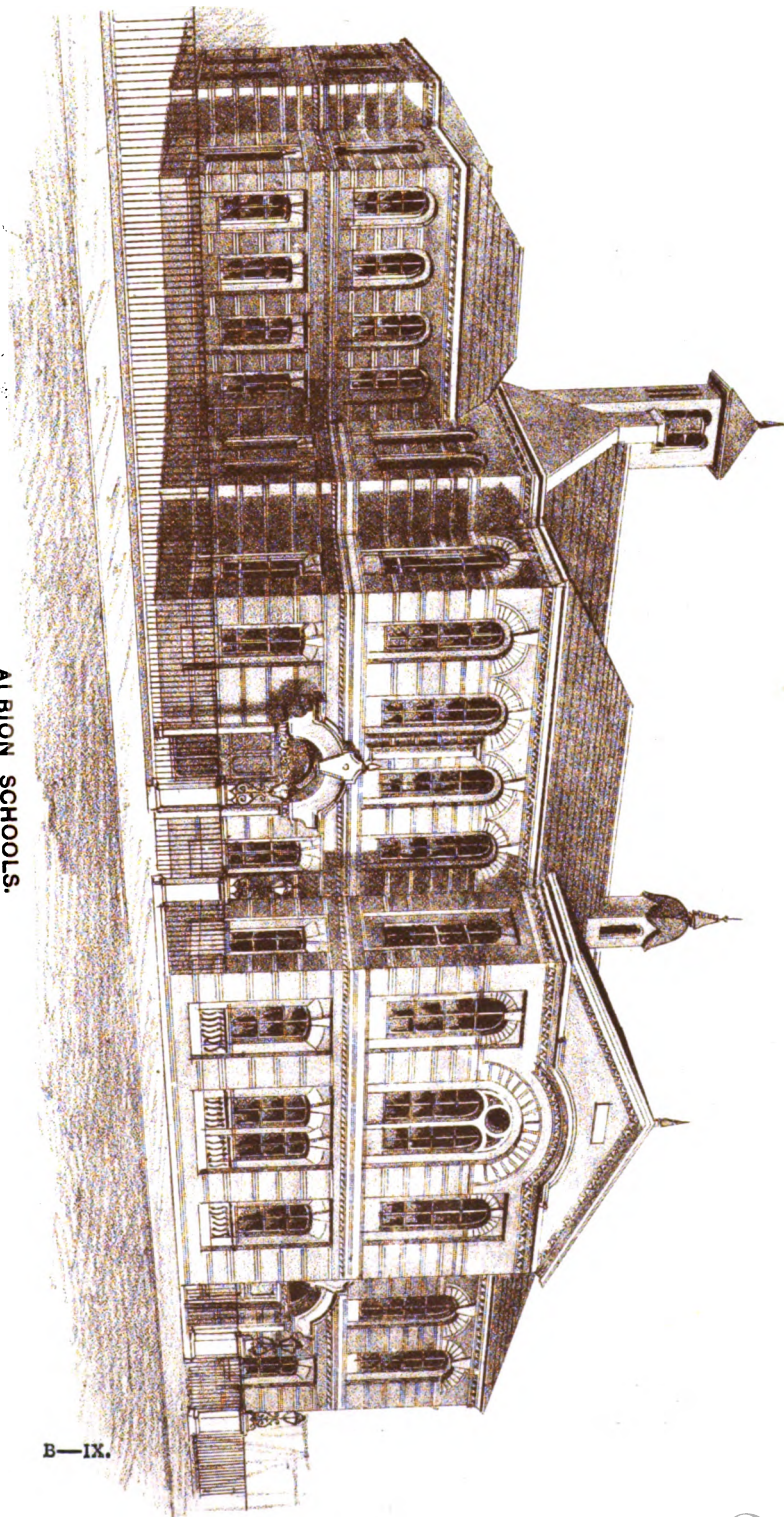
(32.) The following gentlemen formed the Building Committee. Rev. J. G. Rogers, B.A.; Messrs. Hugh Mason, W. Sunderland, N. B. Sutcliffe, Robert Lees, G. H. Kenworthy, with J. O. Taylor, secretary.

(33.) At the opening services the Rev. Dr. McLaren, of Manchester, conducted the service in the Great Room in the presence of not less than 2,000 people. On the following Sunday the Rev. Dr. Raleigh, of London, preached, and on the following Wednesday the Rev. Dr. Punshon, of London, delivered a discourse in the same place.

(34.) See *Half a Century of Independency, &c.*, pp. 34 and 35.

ALBION SCHOOLS.

B—IX.



regard to the difficulties Nonconformists had had in the past in securing for their children a sound education, apart from Episcopalian influences, also the growing needs of the neighbourhood, thereupon decided to open a voluntary school. Accordingly at the close of 1868, Mr. and Mrs. Park, of Glasgow, were invited to undertake the formation of such a school, and on Monday, January 4th, 1869, the formal opening took place. The Rev. J. Hutchison presided, and speeches of a very interesting character were delivered by Hugh Mason, Esq., J.P.; Dr. Pankhurst, of Manchester; Mr. Abraham Park, F.E.I.S., F.R.G.S., &c., and others. After the speeches, and the singing of a hymn, Mr. Park proceeded to enrol the names of the new scholars. At the close it was found that about 100 children had signified their desire to attend. These children, therefore, formed the nucleus of those schools, which have since had a most surprising career, far exceeding the expectations of the most sanguine promoters of the scheme, by their unprecedented success. The tact and teaching power of the head master (Mr. Park), his assiduous care for the children, and the earnest spirit he threw into his labour were soon recognised by the people of Ashton, and before the month of April, 1869, had closed, no fewer than 397 children were in attendance. From this moment the success of the school was ensured. A night school was subsequently opened, and scores of young men flocked in, to avail themselves of the privileges offered, many of whom are now holding very prominent and important positions, not only in Ashton and neighbourhood, but elsewhere. In the report for 1878-9, just ten years after the opening of the school, it is stated that "1,827 boys and girls had been under instruction in the day classes alone," during that year, while in the evening classes there were 298 who had received instruction during that session. In the Science classes there were 103, Art classes 127, and in the evening select classes 43. During this same year the committee, at a considerable expense, constructed a commodious and well-arranged Laboratory for Practical Chemistry, which has since been of great

utility. The progress made by this school during the first decade is clearly shown by the following extract from the report of Her Majesty's Inspector, and published in the "Blue Book," 1878-9, page 631 :—

There is no school in my district which ranks higher in point of numbers and efficiency than the Albion Schools. Not only are the ordinary subjects thoroughly well taught, but the curriculum in the upper classes is as extended in its range as that which might be found in any well-conducted middle-class school. To the credit of the managers and of the head master, I may add that the attendance of half-timers is not only not discouraged, but welcomed, their great aim and object being to afford to all comers, but especially to the children of the poor, an opportunity of rising, through an advanced education, to positions of eminence in after life. For this purpose the Albion Scholarships were established—to which I alluded in my last report—and in 1875 Mr. Hugh Mason generously added yet another to his many benefactions to the school by founding a Scholarship of the annual value of £50, the conditions attached to it being, that 'The Mason Scholar' shall proceed to one of the Universities or to Owens College, Manchester. The obvious inquiry here presents itself, What has been the result of all this educational effort on the part of the authorities of this school? and the answer is both hopeful and encouraging. During the ten years of its existence 7,865 scholars have been admitted to the Day Classes, 3,241 to the Elementary Evening Classes, and 783 to the Science and Art Classes, making a total of 11,889. Thirty-seven young people, who have either passed their apprenticeship or served as assistants in this school, are now at work as certificated teachers in different parts of the country. Three of the scholars have matriculated at the University of London—one has passed his first B.A. examination, and another is an undergraduate at Cambridge—three are practising as solicitors, and one as Assistant Medical Officer of Health for the City of Edinburgh.

On April 8th, 1885, during the celebration of the Jubilee of the Albion Chapel, the old scholars and teachers presented addresses to the Committee of Management, and to Mr. Park, the head master; and as the address to the committee especially refers to the development and utility of the schools, we give it in full :—

To the Rev. John Hutchison, Chairman of the Committee of Management,  
&c., and the Members of that Committee.

Gentlemen,—The celebration of the Jubilee of Albion Chapel appears to us, as representing the present and former teachers and scholars of the above schools, a peculiarly fitting occasion on which to testify to the great obli-

tions under which we have been laid, and the gratitude we all feel, to this church and congregation, for the great benefits of which we have been the recipients through the Educational work carried on and maintained by them in the Albion Schools. The broad, non-sectarian, and generous principle by which you, as a Committee, have been guided in conducting this work has commanded a wide-spread feeling of respect, and has conferred lasting benefits on this town and neighbourhood. The establishment of the Albion Day Schools in 1869, marked an era in the history of the Elementary Education of Ashton-under-Lyne. The active energy displayed in their management—the liberal provision made in them for the higher training of the children of the working classes—the large hearted and intelligent benevolence of Mr. Hugh Mason—a member of the committee, and now the honoured representative of this town in Parliament, in the valuable Scholarships he has given to the schools; as well as the benefactions of many generous friends connected with the Albion Chapel—have all been the means of improving and elevating the quality and character of popular education in this neighbourhood, and have, at the same time, enabled large numbers of young men to prosecute higher walks of study, and to fill, as many of them do now, honourable and responsible positions in the sphere of active life with credit to themselves, and with satisfaction to those to whom they stand related.

The intelligent and cheerful labour which the Rev. John Hutchison, the chairman of the committee since its foundation, has bestowed upon these schools, the sympathy and the kindness which he has uniformly shown towards the scholars and teaching staff attending them, deserve the warmest gratitude and respect. We earnestly hope that the Albion Day Schools, which, since 1869, have given an education of so substantial a character to upwards of 18,000 people, may still be carried on in the same broad and unsectarian spirit; conferring the blessings of a liberal education on the youth of this town, and that the managers may have the conscious sympathy and support of the teachers, the parents, and the scholars in the great work with which they are entrusted.

Signed on behalf of the Old Scholars and Teachers, &c.

Thus it will be seen that during the last six years the same generous spirit has pervaded the efforts of the Committee of Management as hitherto, and that similar success has attended the untiring exertions of the head master (Mr. Park) and his staff, and to-day the schools stand unrivalled in the North, if not in the whole of England, as Denominational Schools. A better monument to the success of the voluntary principle could not exist.

## RYECROFT INDEPENDENT.

Before Ryecroft became a regular preaching station among the Independents, day and Sunday schools had been established. These schools, which were held in Crowthorn, were most probably for the convenience of the workpeople of Messrs. Buckley, whose mills were situated in this locality. These schools were conducted by a person named John Marsden.

In 1845, when the increasing demand for sittings in the Albion Chapel was so great, it became incumbent that the deacons should provide further accommodation.<sup>(1)</sup> At the West End of the town there was a rising population, and it was clear that, sooner or later, some provision would have to be made for the increasing number of members who resided there. Consequently a special Church meeting was convened to consider what action should be taken to meet this demand.<sup>(2)</sup> At this meeting it was unanimously decided—1st, to erect a new Independent Chapel at the West End of the town; 2nd, that the following gentlemen should form a general committee (with power to add to their number), for the purpose of carrying this resolution into effect:—Rev. J. Sutcliffe, Messrs. Nathaniel Buckley, John Buchanan, John Knott, James Knott, James Lord, James Lees, Samuel Nadin, Frederick Reyner, W. H. Sutcliffe, William Sunderland, and William Tweedale.<sup>(3)</sup>

In accordance with the above resolution, spacious school rooms were erected at Ryecroft, from the designs of Mr. Haley, of Manchester, in the Elizabethan style of architecture, and at a cost of £2,000, containing accommodation for 1,000 children. These schools were opened on April 28, 1847, by the Rev. R. W. Hamilton, D.D., LL.D., of Leeds.<sup>(4)</sup> In the evening a public

(1.) *Half a Century of Independency, &c.*, p. 59. (2.) *Ibid.*

(3.) *MS. Church Book.* (4.) *Ibid.*

meeting was held, over which the Rev. J. Sutcliffe presided, when it was announced that "upwards of £2,000 had been subscribed at the commencement of the undertaking." The collection and additional contributions realised on the opening day, amounted to £400, so that the entire cost of the building was defrayed.<sup>(5)</sup> For some time afterwards these buildings were used only for school purposes.<sup>(6)</sup>

In 1848, May 3rd, it was unanimously agreed, at a meeting of the Albion church, "that regular preaching should be forthwith commenced at Ryecroft," and that a second church of the Congregational order should also be formed as early as convenient.<sup>(7)</sup> Public worship was accordingly commenced on the following Sunday, May 7th, when a sermon was preached by the Rev. J. Sutcliffe. Sunday services were afterwards continued, morning and evening, the pulpit being supplied by ministers in the neighbourhood, and students from the Lancashire Independent College.<sup>(8)</sup> On January 4th, 1849, ninety members were transferred from the parent church to form the new church at Ryecroft, and about 200 members of the same congregation went with them.<sup>(9)</sup> The number of scholars in the Sunday school, at Ryecroft, at this time is returned at 500. These members, "dismissed" from the Albion church, were constituted a distinct church, and the ordinance of the Lord's Supper was administered to them for the first time, by the pastor of Albion Street Church, on January 14th, 1849.<sup>(10)</sup> "Never," said Mr. Sutcliffe, "to my knowledge has a second interest been commenced in any place under more auspicious circumstances, or with greater promise of success. This noble branch bids fair to do no ordinary credit to the parent stock."<sup>(11)</sup> Whatever were the expectations of the founders of this church, it is clear that success attended the efforts of those who first

(5.) *MS. Church Book.*

(6.) The officers were supplied from the Albion Church. Among the names of the Superintendents we find those of Hugh Mason and Nathaniel Buckley.

(7.) *MS. Church Book.*

(8.) *Ibid.*

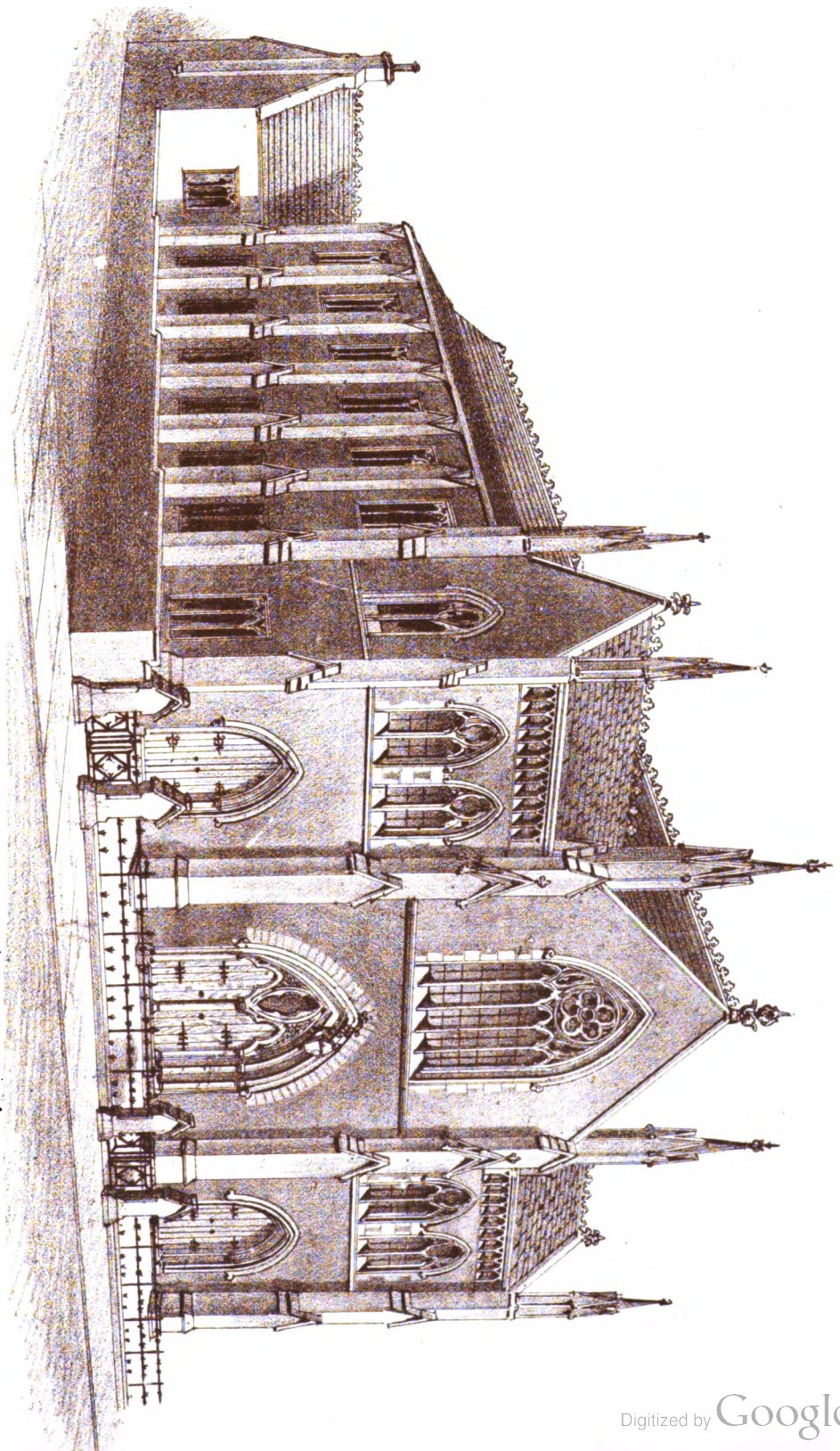
(9.) *Half a Century of Independency, &c.*, p. 59.

(10.) *MS. Church Book.*

(11.) *Half a Century of Independency, &c.*, p. 60.



INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, RYECROFT.





laboured together, in the unity of the spirit, for not long after the establishment of this church, it became a most flourishing institution and a new centre of religious activity and Christian enthusiasm.

In 1852 the present spacious chapel was built to meet the requirements and growing necessities of the congregation, the foundation stone being laid on June 26th, by the late Abel Buckley, Esq., the opening taking place the following year, June 8th. This beautiful structure is after the Old English style of architecture, and cost no less than £5,000. The whole suite of buildings are among the finest in the parish, and form a beautiful ornament to the West End of the town. The Rev. W. Thomas was the first pastor of the church, and after his removal to Bradford, in 1855, the Rev. Thomas Green, M.A., was invited to take the oversight of the church, and was ordained in 1856.

From the beginning of Mr. Green's ministry in Ashton, he has been most assiduous in his labours for the good, not only of the church over which he presides, but of the whole town. Few, if any ministers, have shown a greater desire to be useful to the people generally, or have laboured with greater enthusiasm for their general well being. There is hardly a society—social, political, or religious, which has been originated for the benefit of the people, with which his name has not been identified. In 1878, he received an invitation to take the oversight of a large and important church in the neighbourhood of Manchester. For some time a general feeling of uneasiness existed at the thought of his removal, not only among the members of the church and congregation at Ryecroft, but among a large circle of friends and admirers in the town and neighbourhood. It was a matter for congratulation when Mr. Green elected to remain at Ashton, notwithstanding the inducements held out to him to leave, and his decision was hailed with satisfaction by all who knew him best. Thus after thirty years' service, he still continues to minister with great acceptance and success to a large and influential

congregation.<sup>(12)</sup> "His genial manners, combined with his superior culture and abilities, have raised him high in public esteem."

In connection with this church there has always been a day and Sunday school, the latter having now grown into a vigorous and powerful institution, numbering about 1,000 scholars and 80 teachers. The day school also, from the most feeble beginning, has developed into an influential department, and owes its success partly to the excellent committee of management, and the energy of the present head master (Mr. Eli Shaw)<sup>(13)</sup> whose efforts have been ably seconded by the two mistresses (Misses Simister<sup>(14)</sup> and Fullerton). The following are the names of the masters from the beginning of the school:—Messrs. John Marsden, J. Smith, J. C. Curtis,<sup>(15)</sup> Edwin Salter, Mark Wilks,<sup>(16)</sup> and Eli Shaw. The school is divided into three departments—Boys, Girls, and Infants. The average percentage of passes amounts to 95, the Government Grant per head being proportionately high.<sup>(17)</sup> Twelve class-rooms have been added to the original building, and a handsome lecture room calculated to seat about 200 people. There are upwards of 600 children under instruction in these schools. There is also a flourishing mission conducted by this church at Hooley Hill, also a very successful day school at the same place. The foundation stone of this building was laid by Miss Fanny Buckley, June 24. 1870.

(12.) Mr. Green was called to the church at Wilmslow, in December, 1870.

(13.) Mr. Shaw has been at Ryecroft twenty-one years. According to the length of service he is the oldest teacher in the town.

(14.) Miss Simister has held her position as mistress of the infant school for 20 years.

(15.) Mr. Curtis has for many years been the Principal of the Borough Road Training College for Schoolmasters.

(16.) Mark Wilks is now a prominent Congregational minister in London, and a member of the Metropolitan School Board.

(17.) The schools were built by private subscriptions, and though intended, from the first, as day schools, no aid from the Government was given or solicited towards the building or furnishing of the same; and, further, it is only during the last two years, by the kindness of Messrs. N. and A. Buckley, that the school has been aided by private subscriptions.

### RISE OF THE METHODISTS.

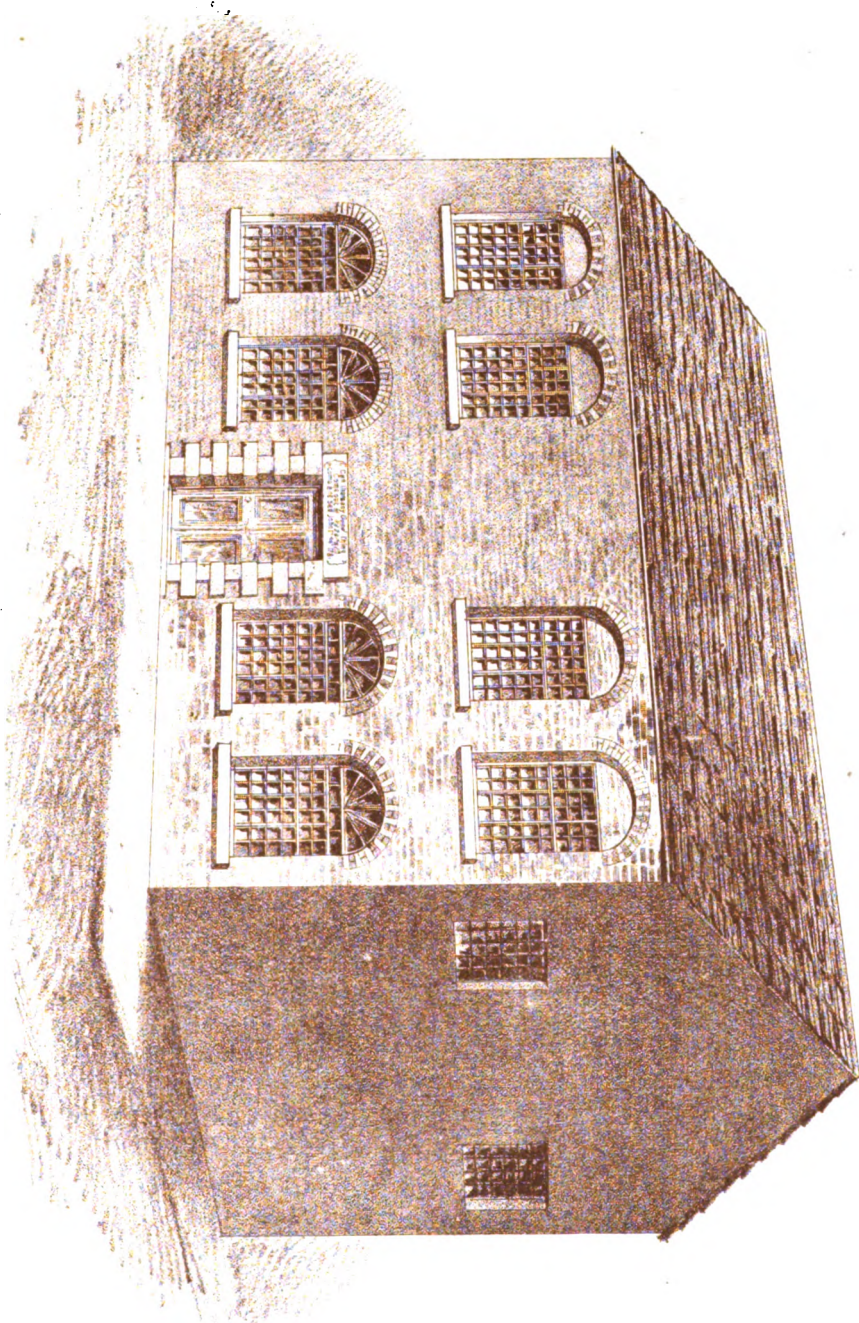
Origin of Methodism—John Wesley preaches in Ashton—Red Hall Chapel—Old Chapel in Harrop's Court—Peter Walker, Samuel Heginbottom, and William Heginbottom—Secession of the New Connexion Methodists—Secession of the Primitive Methodists—Early Struggles in Ashton—United Methodist Free Churches—Independent Methodists.

THE Ecclesiastical history of Ashton would be singularly incomplete without some notice of the rise and development of that branch of the Christian Church known by the generic term of Methodism.<sup>(1)</sup> No section of the Church has made greater advances, or flourished with greater rapidity than the different sectaries included in this denomination. In the present day, Methodism is represented in this borough by five distinct varieties, namely, Wesleyan Methodists, New Connexion Methodists, Primitive Methodists, United Free Church Methodists, and Independent Methodists.

The founder of the first of these sects was John Wesley. He was born in 1703, at Epworth, Lincolnshire, where his father was rector. At an early age he and his brother Charles were sent to Oxford University. While there, laying the foundation of a sound and varied education, they became deeply impressed with the importance of religion, and the necessity of a more rigorous devotion to its requirements than they had hitherto witnessed in the Establishment. Consequently in 1729 John Wesley drew around him a number of young men, who engaged to meet regularly for the purposes of study and devotional exercise. They resolved to order their lives according to a certain method upon which they were all agreed, and in conse-

(1.) This name, which is now applied to a large and influential body of Christians, is of ancient use. It was first given to a class of physicians who flourished about a century before the Christian era. In the 17th century it was applied as a mark of distinction to those Roman Catholic controversialists who, in their disputations with the Protestants, sought to be very precise. In the beginning of the 18th century the name received its present application.—See *Ecclesiastical Cyclopædia*, Vol. ii., p. 422.

OLD CHAPEL, HARROPS YARD.



quence of their habits, were first nick-named "The Holy Club,"<sup>(2)</sup> and subsequently "The Methodists." In 1735 they were joined by George Whitfield, who afterwards adopted Calvinistic doctrines and seceded to the Congregationalists. In 1739 John Wesley, "driven by the bigoted opposition of the clergy to what was termed irregular proceedings," founded those religious societies in which we find the germs of Methodism. These societies soon began to form themselves into a regular system. Preaching places were started in various parts of the country, and rules were drawn up for the guidance of those who sought admission to their communion, which was divided into classes, over which leaders were appointed. In 1744 the first "conference" was held, consisting of six persons only, who are described as "clergymen of the Established Church." At this conference the doctrine to be taught was arranged on an evangelical and Arminian basis, but total secession from the Establishment was discountenanced. The country was next divided into circuits, and to each of them two regular itinerant preachers were appointed, to whom a stated sum was allowed for their support. With this date synchronises the arduous labours of Wesley. He adopted a plan of itinerating the whole country, preaching almost every day in the week, and sometimes three or four times a day. In the month of May, 1747, he visited the parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, being on his way into Yorkshire. In his journal we find the following entry:—"Monday 11, I preached at noon about a mile from Ashton, and in the evening at Stahley-hall."<sup>(3)</sup> With respect to the position of the memorable place, referred to in the above quotation, there has been much controversy. Most probably it was in the neighbour-

(2.) THE HOLY CLUB.—Mr. Wesley, writing of this fraternity, says:—"In November, 1729, four young gentlemen of Oxford, Mr. John Wesley, fellow of Lincoln College; Mr. Charles Wesley, student of Christ Church; Mr. Morgan, commoner of Christ Church; and Mr. Kirkman, of Merton College, began to spend some evenings together in reading the Greek Testament. The next year, two or three of Mr. John Wesley's pupils desired the liberty of meeting with them, and afterwards one of Mr. Charles Wesley's pupils. It was in 1732 that Mr. Ingham, of Queen's College, and Mr. Broughton, of Exeter, were added to their number. These in April were joined by Mr. Clayton, of Brazennose, with two or three of his pupils. About the same time Mr. James Hervey was permitted to meet with them, and afterwards Mr. Whitfield.

(3.) Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, Vol. ii., p. 392. Ed. 1809.

hood of Red Hall, where, it is stated, a society was formed and a small chapel built. Two years after Wesley's visit to Ashton a conference was held, during which Wesley expressed himself in such a manner as to lead his auditors to suppose that he had changed his opinion with respect to "Church order," and it is from this date, 1749, that Methodism is considered to have taken "an organic and permanent form." From this period Methodism grew more and more independent of the Establishment, and the line of demarcation was more clearly drawn every subsequent year between the two churches, until, after the decease of Wesley, the Methodists determined to sweep away every vestige of Episcopalian influence and interference, and delight themselves in perfect freedom. In the year 1784 Wesley's health began to decline. Incessant labour began to tell upon his constitution. With a natural pre-vision, and a desire to consolidate his newly-formed society, he caused a "Deed of Declaration" to be drawn up, constituting one hundred preachers by name, "The Conference of the people called the Methodists," which was strictly adhered to up to the time of his death in 1791,<sup>(4)</sup> but afterwards became not only a source of trouble, but one of the main causes of the serious split which took place in 1796-7, which, for the moment, almost threatened the existence of Wesleyanism in this neighbourhood.

#### WESLEYAN METHODISTS.

The real origin of this body in the Parish of Ashton-under-Lyne is lost in the mists of the past. Among the oldest inhabitants we find the most conflicting statements, founded chiefly on tradition. We are informed by the descendants of several old families that, prior to the decease of John Wesley, there were several flourishing societies in the parish, and that John

(4.) "The deed," writes Mr. Jackson, "Wesley caused to be enrolled in His Majesty's High Court of Chancery, in the year 1784. It created some uneasiness at the time, particularly amongst the preachers whose names were omitted; but that uneasiness soon passed away." Thus the conference had supreme authority, and the legislature and judicial power was vested in a governing body, which, up to 1877, consisted of 100 ministers, known as the "Legal Hundred," but in that year a "scheme was adopted combining both lay and ministerial representation in the Conferences."

Wesley preached here on more than one occasion. However that may be, it is certain that Wesley preached here on the 11th of May, 1747, but whether there existed a society and a chapel at that time at Red Hall, as some would have us to believe, we are unable to determine from the evidence at our disposal. Notwithstanding, it is perfectly clear that such a society did exist a few years after Wesley's visit, and that the little fraternity became the centre of active Christian work in this neighbourhood.

From a memoir of Peter Walker, we learn that he, along with his parents and other members of his family, went to worship at the Old Chapel, Dukinfield, which was occupied at that time by the Presbyterians. That when about ten or twelve years of age a serious disturbance arose in that congregation, in consequence of which several of the most pious families left, among which were Peter Walker's parents, who immediately began to attend the Ashton Parish Church. We are also informed that when he was about twenty-four years of age, he attended "the ministry of the Rev. Thomas Heys, who was then the clergyman at Ashton Church, and a faithful minister of Jesus Christ." "About this time," it is stated by the same authority, "the (Wesleyan) Methodists began to preach at — Chapel, Duckenfield Hall, which is still (1832) in existence."<sup>(5)</sup>

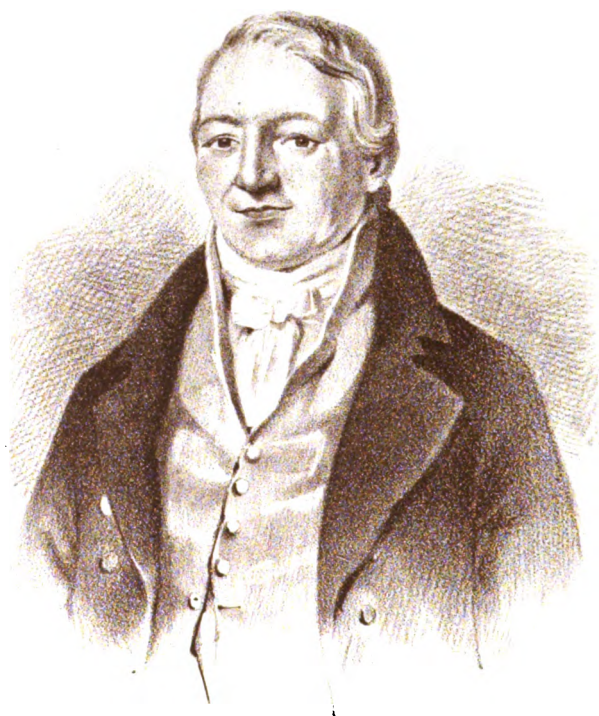
After Walker's conversion, he and several others, among whom was a person named Mary Howard, of Mossley, better known in those days as "Methodist Mary," endeavoured to establish prayer-meetings, and class meetings in the neighbouring villages, consequently, the name of Peter Walker is thus identified with the commencement of Methodism at Mossley, Stalybridge, &c.<sup>(6)</sup> In the year 1781, "an effort was made to build a chapel (in Ashton), but the difficulties appeared to be almost insurmountable. There were in all only about fifteen members in the little society they had formed, and most of them were very poor. Besides, they were scattered far from

(5.) See *Methodist Magazine* (new series), Vol. x., pp. 177, 178.

(6.) *Methodist Magazine* (new series), Vol. x., p. 179.

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SAMUEL HEGINBOTTOM.

one another, and hated of all; so that in many instances their lives were in danger. Yet, depending on Providence, they engaged in the undertaking. Peter Walker, nothing daunted, canvassed Derbyshire, as well as many other places in this neighbourhood, for subscriptions for its erection; and in a short time succeeded in building "a commodious place of worship, with very little debt upon it, which was opened by Mr. Wesley." Thus between the years 1781 and 1786 the first Methodist Chapel within the present Borough of Ashton-under-Lyne was opened; and in the month of September, the same year, a Sunday school was started.<sup>(7)</sup> The chapel referred to is most probably the old place of worship which still stands in Harrop's yard, off Crickets Lane, with the inscription over the door, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Come and see.—St. John, c. i., v. 46, 1781." The scholars were taught here before the service began, and here the little Methodist church continued to prosper until the split took place in 1796-7.

Another incident relative to the spread of Wesleyanism in this neighbourhood is recorded in the memoir of Samuel Heginbottom, Esq., published in 1830. After stating how his parents regularly attended on the ministry of the Established Church, the appointment of his father to the position of parish officer, the kind care and anxious solicitation of his parents on his behalf, his marriage, removal to Manchester, and his subsequent conversion, he proceeds to state with the utmost fervour and beautiful simplicity, his anxiety for the spiritual well-being of his mother, brethren and sisters, as follows:—

I had a mother, and several brothers and sisters, with their families residing at Althill, the place of my birth. I eagerly embraced every opportunity of visiting them and of speaking freely on the subject of salvation by grace, through Jesus Christ. For sometime my labours appeared to produce no good; my old neighbours on their part loudly lamented my misfortune (as they termed it) in leaving the church; however, none of these things discouraged me; I had experienced a happy change from blind security and guilt to favour and peace; I therefore persevered. . . . . One Sunday

(7.) *Methodist Magazine* (new series), Vol. x., p. 181.

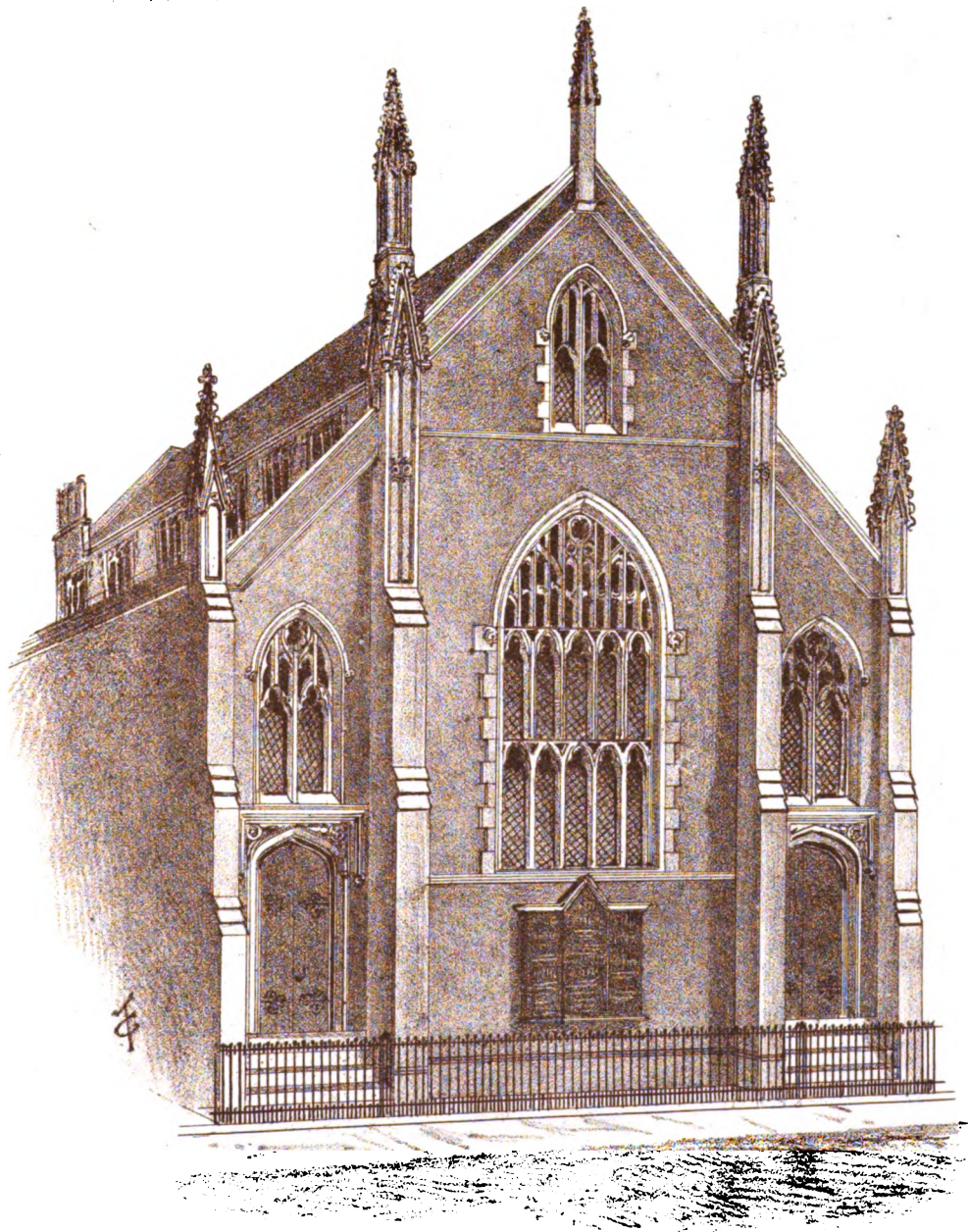
evening, when all had left or retired to rest except my mother, she asked me, if I wished to pray with her before I went to bed. I joyfully answered that I would most willingly do it with her consent. This filled my heart with praise, being the first time I had ever been so favoured, and encouraged me greatly. . . . . I had frequently left religious tracts, which I found were read. I next left three of the small hymn books. At my following visit I proposed to sing a hymn, and soon perceived that they had made good use of the hymn books; they sang with cheerfulness and vigour. Oh, how this rejoiced my heart! Some of them began occasionally to attend preaching at Ashton; but my brother William was the first to join that society. I next prevailed upon them to have a public meeting for exhortation and prayer, which they held in my brother William's house in the same village. Two zealous friends from Manchester and myself attended, also others from Mossley and the neighbourhood. The house was crowded, and it was a truly profitable season, a time of gladness and great joy. Some who had never been at such a meeting, or seen such things, were astonished at the powerful presence of God. A regular weekly prayer meeting was then established, and I shortly after introduced preachers from Manchester. Several of my relations and their neighbours speedily united in society with the people of God, and established a Sunday school, which was continued until they removed from the village.<sup>(8)</sup>

Such is the unvarnished story of the origin and development of some of the earliest Wesleyan Societies in this neighbourhood.

After the eruption, which took place in 1796-7, when a large number of members seceded from the parent stock, we lose all trace of the Wesleyans as a distinct society in Ashton for some time. But it is evident from subsequent events that there were some who had remained faithful to the old cause, for in the year 1804 they built a commodious chapel in New Street (now Stamford Street). This chapel was well pewed throughout, the pulpit being described as handsome, over which was inscribed the words, "Thou God seest me," above which was the figure of a dove, an emblem of the Holy Spirit. Behind the chapel were two rooms, one above and another below.<sup>(9)</sup> The lower room communicated with the chapel and was used as a vestry, and the upper room was used for school purposes, the entrance being from Wood Street. The Sunday school continued to be held here

(8.) *Methodist Magazine* (new series), Vol. viii., pp. 4, 5.

(9.) *History of Ashton*. James Butterworth. Ed. 1825, p. 82.



WESLEYAN CHAPEL, STAMFORD STREET.

IX.—D

until the very excellent premises were erected in Mill Lane, at a cost of £2,500.

The present chapel was erected in 1851, on the site of the old structure, at a cost of £3,000.<sup>(10)</sup> At the opening services the Rev. J. Bambridge preached in the afternoon, and Dr. Beaumont conducted the service in the evening. It is built in the decorated style of English architecture, and accommodates about 1,150 worshippers. This place of worship is now the centre of a large and important circuit.

### METHODIST NEW CONNEXION.

It is now nearly ninety years since the establishment of this religious body in Ashton-under-Lyne. Its worthy founders have passed away, but the cause they espoused with so much earnestness still lives, and the system of church polity they originated

(10) For some time after the erection of this place of worship a debt remained upon the building, which was a constant source of annoyance to certain persons whose goodness displayed itself in rather eccentric forms, sometimes to the chagrin of those who were members of the same community. At that period it was not an unfrequent experience in taking up the local paper to be startled by advertisements of the following rude and curious import:—"The Dedicatory Sermon of the I.O.U. and Promissory Note Chapel will be preached on Monday First. Subject, 'The Scripture rule of payment by I.O.U.'s and Promissory Notes.' Anthem, 'Promissory Notes and I.O.U.'s.'"—*Ashton Reporter*, September 2nd, 1865.—"O Jehovah! Infinite in Wisdom and Power! interpose for the buildings dedicated to Thee! Let interest be superceded, debt discharged, and chief rent remitted, that selfishness and avarice may cease to desecrate 'Holy Ground.'"—*Ashton Reporter*, September 23rd, 1865.—"Who will lay upon his conscience, before God his Maker, Preserver, Redeemer, the debt on the Wesleyan Chapel, Ashton?"—*Ashton Reporter*, August 21st, 1858.—"Wesleyan Chapel, Ashton-under-Lyne, *versus* Each one severally 'Assured.'"—"Wesleyan Chapel.—'How long will you live, Mr.—?' 'Mr.—: I know not. Life is uncertain. I hope, however, to live many years.'"—"Wesleyan Chapel.—'Ah! There's the rub. Hear you not my groaning?' Mr.—: 'Your groaning! No, I hear it not.'"—"Wesleyan Chapel.—'How strange! I thought it exceedingly loud and pitifully distinct; but, perchance, to some ears it is not so.' Mr.—: 'What meaneth then this groaning?' "—"Wesleyan Chapel.—'In human speech it runs thus: Oh! that I could sing over your lifeless form.'

'Ah! lovely appearance of death!

What sight on earth is so fair?

Not all the gay pageants that breath

Can with a dead body compare.'

[TO RELATIVES.]

'Rejoice for a brother deceased;

Domestic loss is public gain:

A soul from Insurance released,

And free from its Star Office chain.' "

W.P.

continues to prosper. While John Wesley lived he ruled supreme in the denomination which bore his name, but at his death the real power was vested in certain ministers, who were careful to maintain their prerogative. This soon gave rise to serious disputes.<sup>(1)</sup> "Some thought that undue power was exercised by many of the preachers, and, in some instances, that moneys were misapplied."<sup>(2)</sup> Suspicion gave rise to many disquieting rumours, and a restless spirit was aroused among the laity, which eventually broke out into open rebellion. The principal asserter of the popular rights was the Rev. Alexander Kilham, who published tracts which gave great offence to the members of the conference. For this cause he was expelled the Wesleyan community in 1796. Dr. Coke, one of the presidents of the conference, wrote to Mr. Kilham—"Hitherto we have been, since the death of Mr. Wesley, the most perfect aristocracy, perhaps, existing on the face of the earth. If there be a change in favour of religious liberty, the people should have some power."

Another grievance, which pressed heavily upon the minds and consciences of some Methodists at that time, was the arbitrary manner in which the members were enjoined upon to recognise the service and sacraments of the Episcopalian Church. The ruling powers of Methodism went so far as to forbid their societies meeting for worship during church hours, and their own ministers were not allowed to give the sacrament to their members or to baptize their children. For these privileges both preachers and people were expected to go to the Parish Church. These deprivations were too galling to be borne by men of strong minds and independent thought.

After Mr. Kilham's ejection by the conference in 1796, he continued to preach in such chapels as were open to him. He visited

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(1.) Disputes arose among the people regarding what was deemed, by many, the despotic rule exercised by the Conference. That body, which was exclusively composed of ministers, firmly refused to make any alteration in the government or representation of the society. —*Ecclesiastical Cyclopædia*, Vol. ii., p. 424.

(2.) *Methodist Magazine* (new series), Vol. x., p. 180, 1832.

Red Hall and Ashton. While here his wife died at the house of his friend, William Heginbottom, and was buried in that gentleman's family grave in the Old Church yard. At the conference, held at Leeds in 1797, delegates from various parts of the country were deputed to request—"That the people might have a voice in the formation of their own laws, the choice of their own officers, and the distribution of their own property."<sup>(3)</sup> The conference was obdurate, and the request was rejected; thereupon, the friends of the popular cause at once seceded from the parent body, and formed themselves into a regular society, with Mr. William Thom as president, and Mr. Kilham as secretary. They next proceeded to supply the "circuits" of the "New Connexion" with preachers, and then authorised the president and secretary to draw up a form of church government, embodying those principles for the support of which they had left the older community.<sup>(4)</sup> The agitation spread, and Mr. Kilham and his friends were daily encouraged in their work of reformation by the support they received from other ministers and their people.

From the very commencement of the New Connexion body in 1796, it has found a congenial home in Ashton-under-Lyne and neighbourhood. The Methodists in Ashton-under-Lyne "read the tracts published by Mr. Kilham and others, and thought a change was necessary, for they had seen the unscriptural authority assumed by some of the preachers, and determined to form themselves into a separate community, and to act upon a more fraternal plan."<sup>(5)</sup> Consequently, after the conference refused to consider the petition which was presented to it at Leeds in 1797, a circuit was formed in Ashton and neighbourhood, and the Methodists of the New Connexion commenced their operations in this district.<sup>(6)</sup> The two most active spirits in the formation of this society were Peter Walker and William Heginbottom, who were chosen the first

(3.) *Ecclesiastical Cyclopædia*, Vol. ii., p. 427.

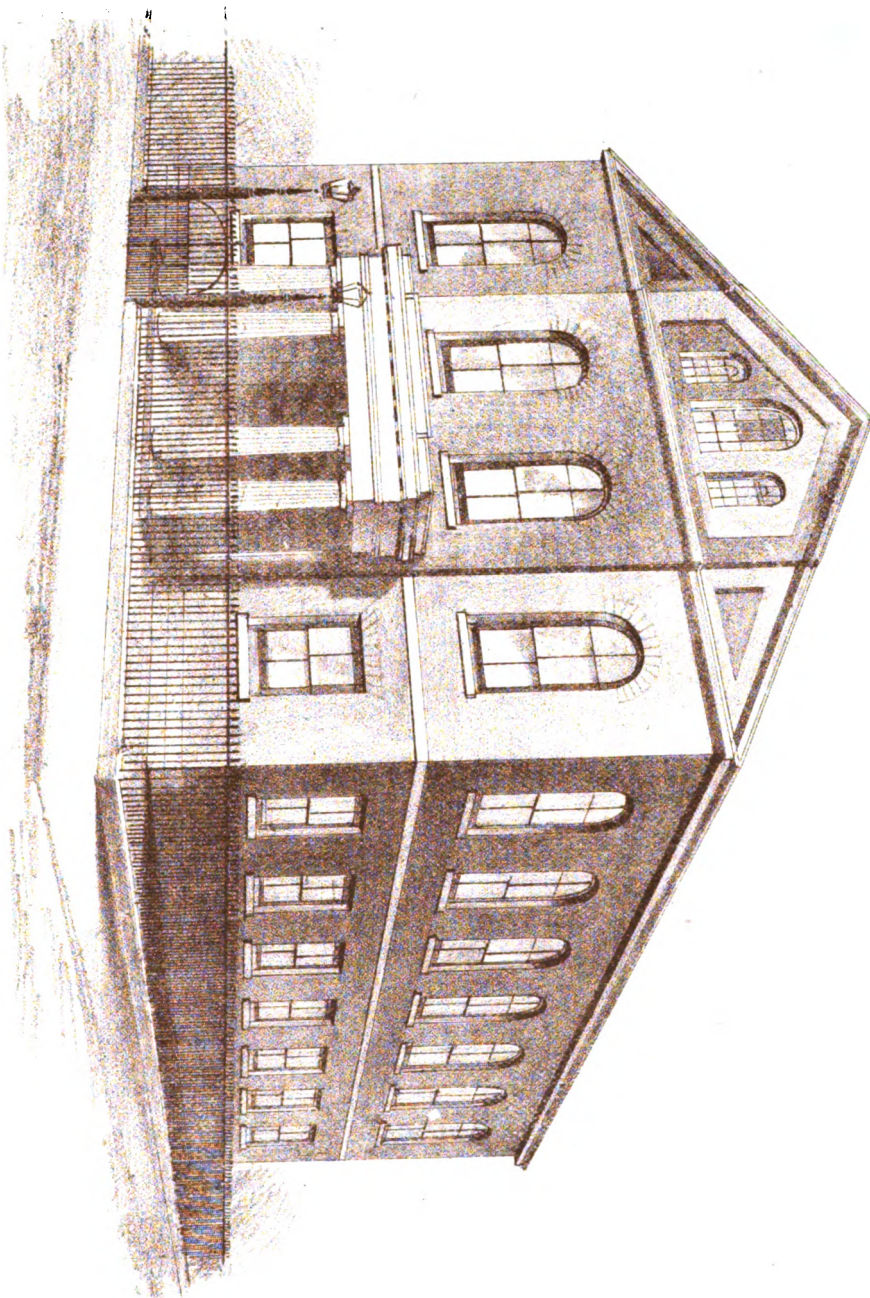
(4.) *Ecclesiastical Cyclopædia*, Vol. ii., p. 427.

(5.) *Methodist Magazine* (new series), vol. x., p. 181, 1832.

(6.) *Methodist Magazine* (new series), Vol. x., p. 181, 1832.—The circuit referred to here must have been united to the Manchester Circuit, of which it subsequently formed a part. It was not until 1804 that the Ashton Circuit was formed.



NEW CONNEXION CHAPEL, STAMFORD STREET.





representatives to conference. Mr. Samuel Heginbottom<sup>(7)</sup> does not appear to have taken any very active part in this eruption, but he tells us that when it had become an accomplished fact, he joined it and gave his support to the "persecuted New Connexion," which ought to have been called "The Protestant Methodists."

According to the most trustworthy authorities, it is evident that the new society was encumbered by difficulties in the early stages of its existence. Notwithstanding the fact that it was persecuted from without,<sup>(8)</sup> still its greatest trouble arose from within the pale of its own communion. During the early stages of the connexion, there was a great influx of members. Some "joined it with an expectation of its being a cheaper gospel; some from a wish to become more generous themselves; some from having been offended; and others from similar unworthy motives. These were either prevailed upon to go back, or else to remain as so many plagues in the camp, till removed by salutary discipline, but a goodly number joined themselves to the New Connexion from higher and purer motives, and remaining firm to their principles, they became pillars in the good cause; while the weak and unstable became a prey to designing men, or deserved victims of their own disappointment."<sup>(9)</sup> Yet, notwithstanding the unfaithfulness of many of its first adherents, the number of good men in Ashton and district who resisted all opposition and endured contumely for the sake of their principles was considerable, and from that day to this the new society in Ashton has numbered among its members some of the noblest

(7.) Mr. S. Heginbottom was residing in Manchester. In his memoir it is stated:—"In my 25th year, I entered into a little way of business as a flax dresser, the successor to my father. I boarded with my mother, and resolved to remain single until I had fair proof that I could support a wife and family. When I had just entered my 27th year, I married; and in the May following, 1783, removed to Manchester."—*Methodist Magazine* (new series), Vol. viii., p. 3, 1830. "At the Leeds Conference in 1801, Mr. S. Heginbottom was appointed secretary. He was the founder of the Beneficent Fund and Paternal Fund, instituted for the support of aged or disabled ministers, their widows, and their orphan children. Six times he was a representative in conference, eight times member of the Annual Committee, and six times treasurer of the Connexion. He died March 19th, 1829, aged 72 years. In the new chapel there is a tablet erected to his memory."

(8.) The New Connexionists were nicknamed, as a reproach, Jacobins, Levellers, Paineites, and Public Disturbers.

(9.) *Methodist Magazine* (new series), Vol. viii., p. 3, 1830.

and best citizens.<sup>(10)</sup> This society began with forty members, and was included in the Manchester Circuit, only getting a sermon occasionally from a regular preacher, the other appointments having to be taken by local preachers, among whom, it is stated, were two Justices of the Peace—James Lord and James Dean.

Prior to the eruption in 1796-7 the secessionists worshipped in the small room in Harrop's yard,<sup>(11)</sup> which was then the most aristocratic part of the town. Here they held their Sunday school; but, in 1799, they built a more commodious chapel, on the site of the present chapel in Stamford Street, at a cost of £900. The old premises were now wholly used for Sunday school purposes, where it continued "with various degrees of prosperity until the year 1800, when two rooms were adapted behind the chapel in Peaceable Street, now known as Fleet Street. In 1804 Ashton was constituted a circuit, embracing Mossley, Red Hall, and Stalybridge, the first ministers being the Revs. W. Driver and B. Blagborough. The number of members was 567, which in 1806 had increased to 678, when Mottram and Oldham were added to it. In 1808, 9 chapels, 12 societies, 3 ministers, 13 local preachers, and 730 members were returned by the circuit.<sup>(12)</sup> In 1809 Hooley Hill, Failsworth, and Middleton were taken in, and in 1815 the returns were—12 chapels, 3 circuit ministers, 20 local preachers, and 743 members.

(10.) Among many well known names we find the following—Heginbottom, Thornley, Harrop Dean, Mills, Buckley, Andrew, Lord, Robinson, Lawton, Wilson, Hellewell, Howard Parry, Binns, Walmsley, Whittaker, Kenworthy, Atherton, and Tipping.

(11.) This is the memorable old room already referred to, which appears to have been used by the Wesleyans, New Connexionists, and Independents in their initial stages. We have seen a MS. note referring to the year 1780, but wanting in authority, which states that:—"The chapel was locked against them (the Wesleyans) by the trustees, and the preachers preached in the street. The unfaithful trustees, after driving them (the Wesleyans) out of it, and getting themselves better accommodation, made them an offer of it, knowing that their interests would be advanced by their acceptance of it. After the Methodists were deprived of their chapel. they engaged to build themselves a new one in the New Street, then King Street; whilst the Kilhamites were at the other end of the town, they would find themselves comfortably situated, and began to make a collection for that purpose. Their enemies hearing of it determined to suppress it, and, if possible, to supplant it. They, therefore, set to work and began to make a collection for a new chapel themselves, begging from house to house, and stepping in only a few doors before the Methodists."

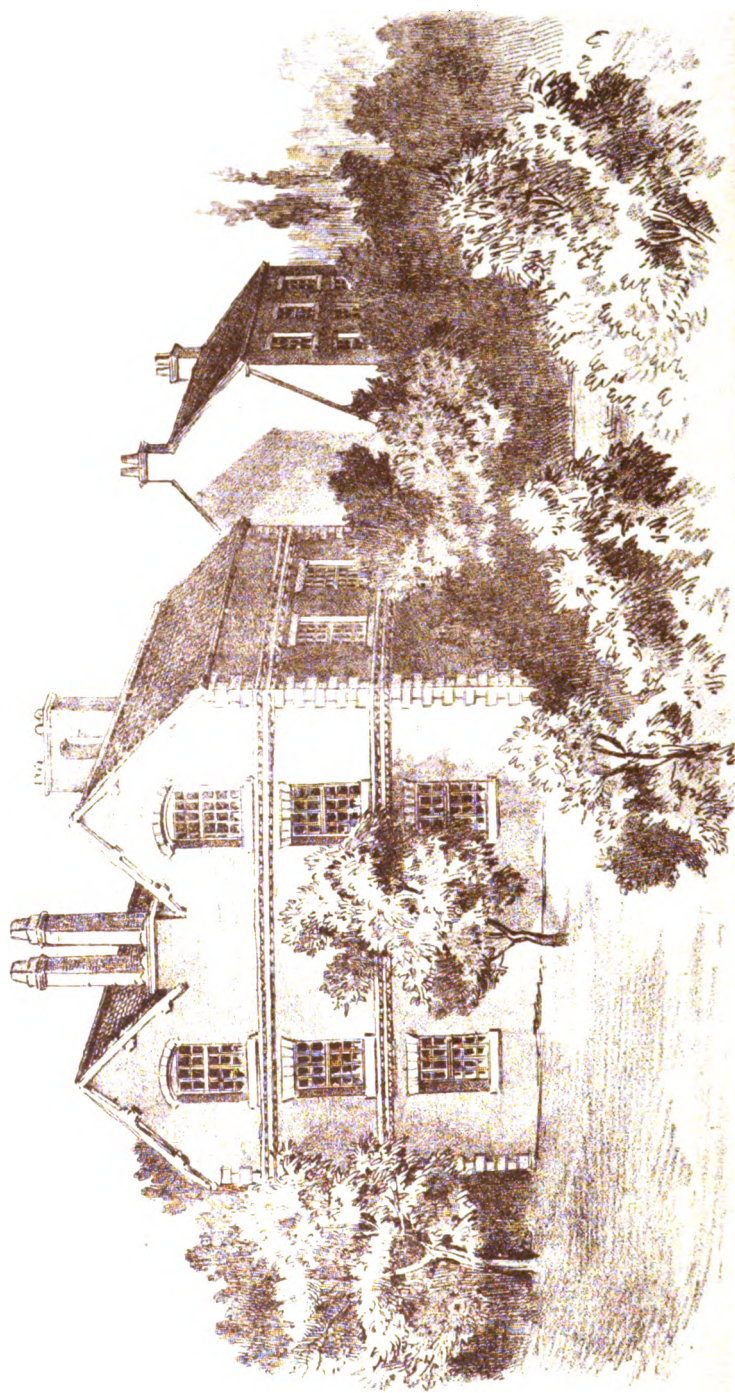
(12.) This year 1808, preaching was commenced at Higher Hurst, in the house of Mr. Grundy, by the Ashton ministers, at the request of Mr. and Mrs. Whittaker. In 1812 a chapel was built, and shortly afterwards a Sabbath school was established.

During the period of fourteen years the school was carried on in the two rooms before mentioned until the year 1814, when it was so crowded that two more rooms became indispensable. Two other rooms were added. Thus it continued till 1825, when two more small rooms were laid to the school; and in January, 1826, the last enlargement of another small room was made. During this year the first conference was held in Ashton, the representatives being the Rev. W. Shuttleworth and Mr. James Dean. In July, 1828, a new school was built at a cost of £500, and was opened in the month of February following.<sup>1</sup> In 1832 the chapel in Stamford Street was enlarged to its present dimensions, at a cost of £1,200.<sup>(14)</sup> It is calculated to seat 900 persons. Five years subsequent to the above date, the circuit embraced Ashton, Mossley, Stalybridge, Hooley Hill, Lees, Hurst, Oldham, Fails-worth, Newton, Red Hall, Hyde, Delph, Mottram, and Holling-worth, and a return was made to conference in which it was stated that there were 18 chapels, 14 societies, 4 ministers, and 1,793 members. When the conference paid its second visit to Ashton, in 1838, Stalybridge and Mossley were represented as separate circuits, the three places—Ashton, Stalybridge, and Mossley—returning an aggregate of 20 chapels, 16 societies, 6 ministers, and 2,072 members.

(13.) A tabulated statement of how the time was employed in this school, in this same year, has been preserved in the *Methodist Magazine*:—School opened at 9-30 a.m. by singing and prayer, time allowed 15 minutes. Call over names, time allowed 10 minutes. Examining scholars' hands, faces, &c., to see if clean, time 5 minutes. Ten o'clock reading lesson, time 30 minutes. Catechising lesson, time 20 minutes. Sing, superintendent's address, time 20 minutes. 11-15 a.m. spelling lessons on book, time 15 minutes; spelling lessons off book, time 15 minutes. Singing and prayer, 15 minutes. School dismissed precisely at twelve. Afternoon, school opened at 1-30 p.m. Same order as before, until four o'clock.

(14.) In 1832 a tabulated statement was published in the *Methodist Magazine* (Vol. x., new series, p. 96). containing some interesting information relative to this and other schools in the district. It is stated that: Our friends in Ashton, viewing the want of Sunday school instruction in the immediate vicinity of this town, have liberally erected three Branch Schools. One at Waterloo, which was opened in 1820; another at Hurst Brook, which was opened in 1824; and one in Dukinfield, which was opened in 1829. These are all attached to the Ashton school, and are governed by the same committee, &c. The cost of these schools was as follows:—Ashton school, £500; Waterloo, £159; Hurst Brook, including three cottages under the school, £590; Dukinfield, £200. The number of teachers and scholars at that time was—Ashton, teachers, 94; scholars, 503. Hurst Brook, teachers, 38; scholars, 296. Waterloo, teachers, 19; scholars, 116. Dukinfield, teachers, 32; scholars, 258.





**RED HALL, AUDENSHAW.**  
*Erected 1672 : Taken down about 1877.*





The year prior to the visit of the conference Joseph Barker had been stationed at Mossley, and shortly after his settlement, began to advocate principles which were considered heretical. Intense heat was generated during the Barker controversy in this district, and great difficulties and much annoyance were experienced by the societies in the immediate neighbourhood, where, after he had been expelled by conference, he found a considerable following.<sup>(15)</sup> So great was the influence of this preacher that it is reported that his conduct not only seriously affected the societies in this neighbourhood, but that, when the return for the whole Connexion was made in 1851, it was found that there had been a very considerable decrease in membership as the consequence.

Once more the success which attended the efforts of the superintendents and teachers, caused them to seek for further accommodation. Consequently in 1850 the school premises were further enlarged at a cost of £1,000.<sup>(16)</sup> In the following year, Ashton was visited for the third time by the conference, when the Rev. W. Mills and Mr. Joseph Tipping were the representatives for this circuit, the Rev. T. Waterhouse being appointed president that year. In 1864, during the "Cotton Panic," the conference visited Ashton for the fourth time, when, despite the terrible distress then existing in Lancashire, there was collected no less a

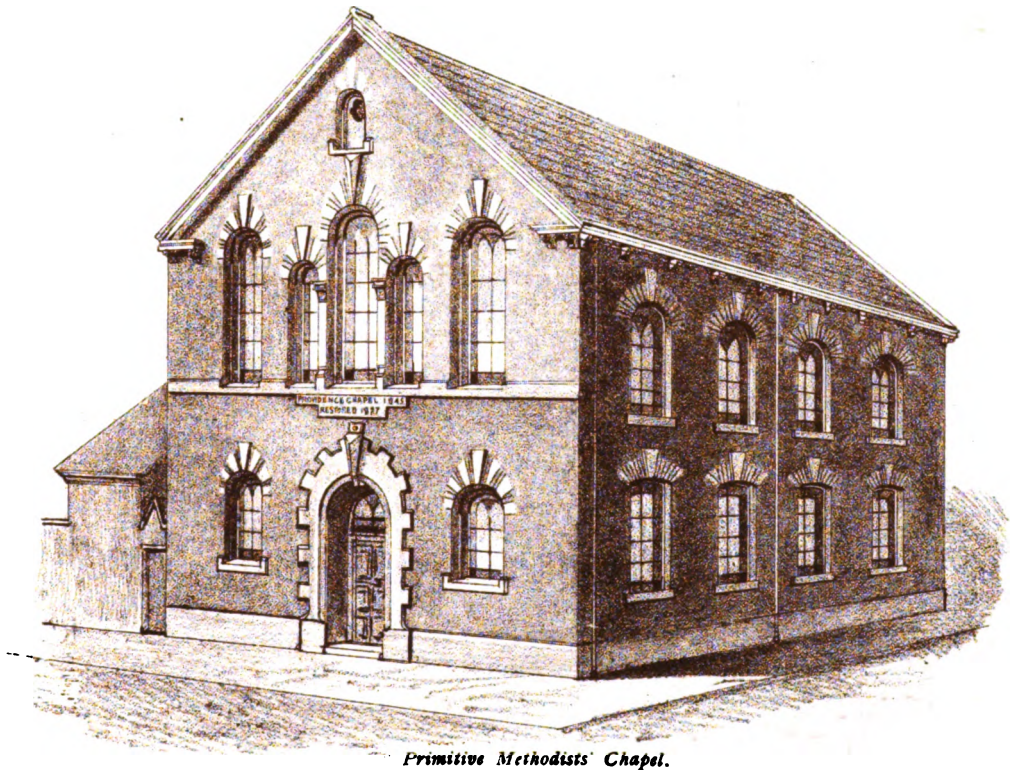
(15.) Referring to his residence at Mossley, he says:—"In 1837, shortly after I was stationed at Mossley, I had a discussion with a clergyman on the propriety or lawlessness of teaching the children of the poor to write in our Sunday schools. The clergyman contended that I was Sabbath-breaking. I maintained that it was Christian beneficence. After the debate I published my views on the subject in a pamphlet. Some of my brethren denounced the pamphlet as heretical, and the editor of the *Magazine* took occasion to inform his readers that my views were not the views of the body to which I belonged."—*Teachings of Experience*, p. 51. In another place, referring to the origin of his trouble in Ashton, he writes:—"In 1837, while I was stationed in the Mossley Circuit, I began a weekly periodical, called the *Evangelical Review*. . . . A draper, a leading member of the society at Ashton, published a circular, announcing the winter fashions, and sent copies to the members of my congregation, pressing them to go and purchase his wares, many of which were both costly and useless. I copied this circular into my periodical, and advised my readers to disregard its counsels, and to spend their money like Christians. I added some remarks on the inconsistency of professing Christians urging people, even in the way of trade, to waste their Master's money on things forbidden by His Word. This article created a great amount of excitement, and some would fain have it censured by Conference, but they were not allowed to have their way."—*Teachings of Experience*, pp. 43 and 44.

(16.) On November 18th, 1797, when the annual sermons were preached, the collection amounted to £5 11s. 1d. This year, 1836, the collections and donations together amounted to £182 3s. 4d.



sum than £250 at the missionary made on behalf of the scholars the present school premises were years later Ashton was honoured the fifth time.



*Primitive Methodists' Chapel.*

### PRIMITIVE METHODISTS.

Perhaps there is no denomination in the Borough of Ashton which has passed through greater persecution than the Primitive Methodists. The founders of this denomination were Hugh Bourne and William Clowes. In the early part of the present century, a revival of religion broke out amongst the working-men engaged in the Potteries, in Staffordshire. Open air meetings, called "Camp meetings," were held on a hill known as Mow Cop, and were attended by multitudes of people, who flocked from all parts of the country to that memorable spot. Those who took the principal part in conducting these meetings were members of the Wesleyan connexion, but as their proceedings met with the disapproval of the circuit in which they were members, they were

first warned and then expelled, for persisting in their determination to hold camp meetings, which were considered "contrary to the discipline of the church."

In 1811 these expelled members formed themselves into a separate body. In 1812 they adopted the name of "Primitive Methodists." Since that time their numbers and influence have gradually increased, and to-day they are recognised as one of the most powerful sections of modern Methodism. The doctrines held by this community are much the same as those set forth by the parent society, their main object being to diffuse Christian knowledge among the masses, the ignorant and neglected. When they first came to Ashton, George the Fourth had just ascended the throne, and everything seemed to point to the triumph of the Episcopalian party once more. The dissenting bodies were not very active. Methodism had spent its early force, and a few irregular, but thoroughly earnest stragglers from the main body, nicknamed "Ranters," were all that seemed to display any real activity in evangelising the masses. These were the first preachers of the Primitive Methodists. They succeeded in establishing a little cause in Ashton, after much persecution and suffering. The story of the first "Missioners" is full of the most touching incidents.

The first preacher, of whom we have any record, who came to Ashton belonging to this body was Walter Carter. Of the difficulties he had to overcome and the persecution he suffered, we may form some idea from his own account of those times. On Sunday, May 27, 1821, Walter Carter preached at Ashton, from the steps of the Old Cross. He was not much encouraged, for he had noticed that "the people seemed very hard," but he persevered, and on the 8th of July, he records that he "preached to a very large and attentive congregation," that he had "much liberty," and "much good was done." "But," he continues, "while I was preaching, the constable came, and took down my name, and desired me to desist, which I refused to do.

He then knocked me down, and I fell off the Cross steps among the people. After this he took hold of my coat collar, shook me, and tore my coat. Here the crowd was ready to take up arms for me; the people, on seeing the constable use me so ill, came forward in a body, and had the constable attempted to take me to prison, as he threatened, no doubt something serious would have happened. All this time the people cried, 'Preach, preach!' When the constable had gone, I resumed my place, and finished my discourse with much liberty, to an increased congregation of people." The action of the constable was followed by a summons to attend the petty sessions at Oldham, concerning which Mr. Carter has left us an interesting record:—

July 12. I was summoned before a magistrate at Oldham, for preaching at Ashton on the 8th instant. Brother Gibson also was summoned to appear, together with several more of our friends, who were with him and with me, when preaching there. We went together to Oldham, but charges only were brought against Brother Gibson and myself; we were charged with having disturbed the peaceful inhabitants of Ashton. We told them our Lord had given us a commission to preach the gospel to poor sinners, and we did not choose to desist; that we did not regard bonds and imprisonments for Jesus' sake; but should rejoice if counted worthy to suffer for His name's sake. The magistrates said complaints had been made, and they must do their duty; and asked us if we would find bail. We said, "No." We were then put in the care of the constable, till our commitments could be made out. We awaited at the "inn," till near ten at night. They then sent for us and said, they could not think of sending us to prison, and offered to take our own bail to appear at the sessions. I told them I had to preach, and could not spend my time there. But if they would appoint us a time we would attend, which they did, and we then parted in a most friendly manner.

Another preacher, belonging to this sect was more severely dealt with. This was Samuel Waller. The clergy came out more prominently against him. The Rev. George Chetwode, M.A., was then rector of the Parish, and it was supposed at that time that these outrages were committed with his connivance. The Rev. W. R. Hay, vicar of Rochdale, made himself conspicuous by sitting in judgment upon this humble preacher of the Gospel, and sentenced him to three months' imprisonment for

preaching on the steps of the Ashton Old Cross. Samuel Waller has preserved the following interesting account of this event:—

June 17, 1821. On this day, Sunday, agreeable to appointment, I preached at Newton in the morning and at Stalybridge at two. Here was a large congregation and a good time. Joseph Bould, a leader at this place, says, that under this sermon several were convinced, who have since joined his class. At five o'clock in the evening I preached at Ashton, when a most ungodly woman was convinced of sin, became serious, and after some time joined the society. It was here, and at this place, that I was vehemently accosted by Samuel Newton, a subordinate constable of Ashton. Being fatigued with preaching twice, and having walked fourteen miles, I asked Joseph Bould to open the service; but, before he had done praying, he was stopped by a vociferous noise made by S. Newton. I told S. Newton he might speak to me as I was the person intending to address the people. "It does not matter," said S. Newton, "you shall not preach here. Your party has been preaching here several Sundays together, but we did not take much notice of it, as we thought you did not intend to continue; but we are determined to stop it. Do you know that we can fine you forty pounds?" I replied, "You cannot fine me so much as sixpence." After further words, S. Newton went away, but but soon returned, and asked my name. I then addressed the people, desiring them to be very attentive and quiet; adding, "I have a right to preach, but not to stop the passage, and I hope if any carriage should pass by you will make plenty of room." . . . . On the Tuesday following I received a summons to attend the Petty Court at Oldham, on the Thursday. At the court, Constable Newton laid aside his threat of fining, and said, "That Mr. Waller had collected, or had caused to be collected, from 150 to 200 people in a street in Ashton-under-Lyne, to the great nuisance of His Majesty's liege subjects of that place." I then said that if the court would indulge me to speak a few minutes, I would explain the whole business; proving to them the purity of my motives in the course I had pursued, for which I was that day called to trial. The answer of the magistrates was, "You know, Mr. Waller, that when complaints are made to us we are obliged to listen to them." I gave bail to appear at the sessions, at Salford. On Monday, July 23rd, 1821, the trial came on at the New Bailey Sessions, Salford. The Rev. W. R. Hay was chairman of the bench. The indictment contained three counts. The first was obstructing the highway; which was done to the great damage and nuisance of His Majesty's liege subjects. The second charged the meeting with being tumultuous, and occasioning great disturbance. The third shouting and singing. The two last counts were totally rejected by the jury. The before named S. Newton and another person named Ogden, were witnesses. They deposed that a hearse came with a

funeral, which was obliged to go a contrary road to the direct one on account of that being blocked up by J. Waller and his company. But the truth was, the friends connected with the hearse went the same way they were accustomed to go on former occasions; and they were willing to come forward, upon their oath, to say they went the way they intended. Also, it was evident that neither hearse nor carriage was obstructed; and notwithstanding the suppositions of the witnesses, there was sufficient room for any carriage to pass. The jury consulted awhile, and then concluded that S. Waller was guilty of obstructing the highway. I was then sentenced to three months' imprisonment, and had to give security to keep the peace for two years.

Thus these humble preachers persevered in their work until the authorities grew weary of their fruitless endeavours to suppress them, and they were allowed to prosecute their purpose until they had established a church in the town. Their first meeting place was in a cottage in Park Street, and subsequently they removed to a room in Fleet Street. Here they continued to worship until they built a little place of their own in Katherine Street, where the new chapel, erected in 1845, now stands. This place of worship will seat about 700 persons, and cost, in the first instance, £800, but has since been restored. This society is one of the most influential in the Stalybridge Circuit, which includes Ashton, Dukinfield, Hurst, and Mossley.

#### UNITED METHODIST FREE CHURCH.

This denomination represents the amalgamation of several different secessions from the Wesleyans, namely, the Protestant Methodists, formed in 1828; the Wesleyan Methodist Association, which originated during the controversy in 1835, concerning the training of ministers, and the undue exercise of power on the part of those in authority; and the Wesleyan Reform Association, which seceded in 1849, for reasons very similar to those which led to the splits in 1796-7, 1828, and 1835. The United Methodists have since become an extensive and powerful organization. This section of the Christian church was not represented in Ashton until October, 1865, when a discussion took place at the Manchester district meeting as to the desirability of establishing



a cause here. At first there seems to have been a little misgiving as to the wisdom of taking such a step, as they had not a single member residing in the neighbourhood whom they knew of, or a single friend who would be likely to assist them. Notwithstanding



*United Methodists' Free Church Chapel.*

this, it was decided to face the difficulties and begin the work. A preaching place was taken, and John Ashworth preached the first sermon on their behalf. The popularity of Mr. Ashworth

was sufficient to command a fair congregation, and resulted in the establishment of a small society. It was not long before this little society realised sufficient success to justify them, as they thought, in taking the Israelites' Sanctuary in Church Street, at a rent of £60 per annum. This proved a great mistake. It was too large, too expensive, and inconvenient for the struggling church. After suffering some little reverses, they succeeded in obtaining a smaller room in Bentinck Street, which was also found very inconvenient. It now became evident that a chapel was indispensable to their success, but how to obtain it was at first too great a problem for them to solve. At length they held a public meeting in the Town Hall, over which Hugh Mason, Esq., presided. This meeting was a great success and gave a new impetus to the feeble cause, and became the beginning of better days. When they left the Sanctuary, in Church Street, they had 24 members, and half-a-dozen Sunday scholars, but at the beginning of 1868 the number of members had been augmented to 60, and the teachers and scholars together numbered 104. The project of building a chapel was once more set on foot, and a meeting was convened, over which the Rev. S. Barton, the General Missionary Secretary, presided, to discuss the propriety of commencing the work at a cost of £500 or £600; but in consequence of the liberal manner in which contributions were promised, their ideas developed, so that a chapel costing nothing less than £2,000 would satisfy them. Mr. Councillor William Hill promised £100 on condition that they spent no less than that sum, while Mrs. Hill, her daughter and two sons, promised to supplement Mr. Hill's offer to a considerable extent. At this juncture they found a friend in Hugh Mason, Esq., who seconded their efforts by a noble gift to the building fund. A site was selected in one of the principal thoroughfares in the town, and the work was at once proceeded with. This beautiful structure, which stands in Henry Square, is an adaptation of the Norman and Italian style of architecture, and is built of brick with stone dressings. The ground floor is used at the present time for School purposes, and the gallery for worship.



It is so constructed, that at any time, the centre of the gallery may be taken out, and the whole of the building converted into a chapel. The slated spire is octagon in form, surmounted by an ornamental cresting and finial. The extreme length is 63 feet, the width being 48 feet. The total accommodation is about 750, viz., 400 on ground floor, and 350 on the gallery or chapel floor. The foundation stone was laid on June 27th, 1868, by Hugh Mason, Esq., J.P., and the chapel was opened on Sunday, May 8th, 1869, when the Rev. Anthony Halliday, of Darlington, preached two sermons, and on the following Thursday evening, the Rev. Marmaduke Miller (President of the Methodist Free Churches), occupied the pulpit. The collections on the Sunday amounted to £36, which sum was augmented on the Thursday following by rather more than £15.

#### INDEPENDENT METHODISTS.

This Society was first established in Ashton-under-Lyne about the year 1818. It is stated that the founders of the Church were Messrs. George Hollingworth, John Newton, James Wroe, William Wright, and James Wright, who seceded from the Wesleyan Methodists, in the above-named year, in consequence of a dispute with the Superintendent Minister of the Circuit. These persons formed themselves into an independent body, but still retained their belief in the doctrines taught by the Wesleyans. They hired a room over some shops in Stamford Street, near the Parish Church, then known as "Bullman's Buildings," where they held service on Sundays, and also Experience meetings, called "Band Meetings," and consequently the room was designated "The Bandroom." In 1821 it became necessary to obtain larger premises, and some garrets over the old mill, in Wellington Road, were hired, and a Sunday School was commenced.<sup>(1)</sup> The room in Stamford Street was vacated, and the members of the Church

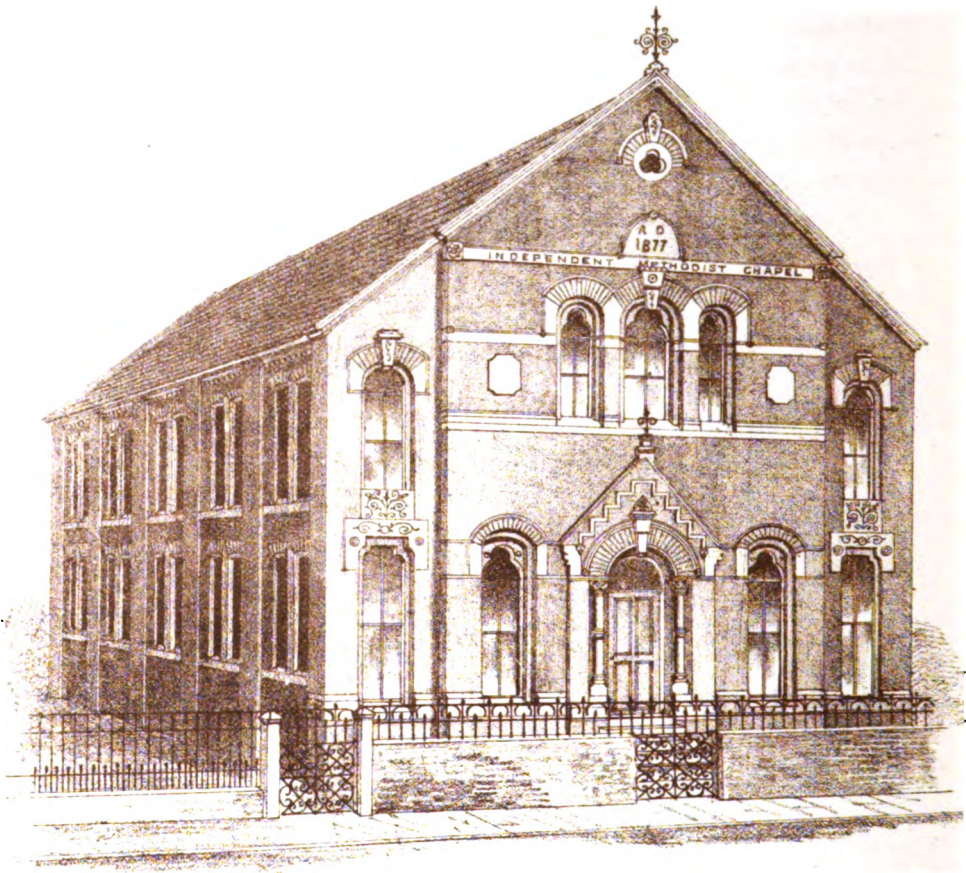
(1.) It is stated that this school was the only school, at that time, at which many of the inhabitants of Charlestown and neighbourhood had the opportunity of receiving either religious or secular education.

concentrated all their energies on the new station.<sup>(2)</sup> Great prosperity appears to have attended the efforts of this congregation whilst they worshipped in these rooms, the preachers being assisted by brethren from Manchester, Oldham, and other places. About this time, also, they joined the Union of the Independent Methodists, or Free Gospel Churches; and, in 1823, Peter Ashley, a member of the Ashton-under-Lyne Church, was elected to the office of President of the Connexion.

On March 17th, 1838, the foundation-stone of a new school-house and meeting-room, on the opposite side of Wellington Road was laid by Mr. Humphrey Harper, of Manchester, and in the same year the building was completed at a cost of £420.<sup>(3)</sup> In April, 1846, the frontage of this school, which was then in West street, was changed to Wellington Road, in consequence of the new branch line of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway to Stalybridge being opened. The church continued to worship in this school-room until 1861, when an attempt was made to erect a chapel, but, owing to the misappropriation of part of the funds, it proved abortive. This was a severe blow to the little church, and had it not been for some few who determined to remain true to the cause, it would undoubtedly have terminated its existence in this district.<sup>(4)</sup> About ten years ago (1875) the teachers and congregation feeling the inconvenience of continuing the services and teaching in the same room, determined to renew their efforts to erect a new chapel and school, and by various agencies about £400 were raised, which the committee considered sufficient to justify them in commencing building operations. The foundation stones of this edifice were laid on September 22nd, 1877, by Abel Buckley, Esq., J.P., and Alex. Denovan, Esq., President of the Connexion, and the

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- (2.) It was about this time that Messrs. John Miller, R. Whitehead, Abraham Walker, and several other earnest labourers threw in their lot with the original founders, and rendered valuable service to the little church.
- (3.) This building when first erected consisted of one room only, and was used both for school and congregational purposes. It was calculated to hold a congregation of 400 persons.
- (4.) Amongst the names of those who have laboured very earnestly in the development of this society are the following:—George Hollingworth, Abraham Walker, John Miller, A. McWhire, James Hornby, and John Robinson.

chapel was opened on Good Friday, April 19th, 1878. The premises, including subsequent alterations and extensions, cost upwards of £2,100. It is built of stock bricks, and relieved with ornamental



*Independent Methodist Chapel*

Yorkshire stone dressings. The school consists of a large room, with three class rooms, and will accommodate 400 persons. The chapel will seat 300 persons.

This church has almost from its formation been connected with the United Free Gospel Churches, and is also one of the churches forming the Oldham Circuit. The peculiar tenets of this

denomination may be summarised as follows:—Every church is independent or self-governed, managing its own affairs. All members are considered equal, and if of full age, alike share in the government of the church. The ministry is open and free, in contradistinction to a clerical order, and they hold that every Christian scripturally qualified ought to be placed in the ministry. No clerical titles or designations are recognised, and the ministry is purely voluntary and unpaid. As in the case of the other branches of the great Methodist body, the churches in adjacent districts are associated in circuits.

On June 21st, 1879, the 74th annual meeting of the United Free Gospel Churches was held in Ashton-under-Lyne. At the public meeting Hugh Mason, Esq., presided, and gave a donation of £50 towards the reduction of the chapel debt, being only one of many instances in which he rendered assistance to this cause. The present ministers are Messrs. James Howarth and John Hadfield. In June, 1885, there were 27 teachers, 105 scholars, 48 church members, and two preachers in connection with this society.

#### THE BAPTISTS.

This denomination exists in England under two distinct names, popularly known as the General and Particular Baptists.<sup>(1)</sup> The former are so called because they hold the doctrine of universal redemption, the latter being designated “particular” because of their Calvinistic tendencies. This body is represented by two distinct societies in Ashton-under-Lyne, the larger of the two having a neat and commodious chapel in Welbeck street, while the smaller one meets regularly for worship in a little sanctuary in Granville street. In the year 1817 the General Baptists at Staly-

(1.) When the Baptists made their first appearance in England as a distinct body is difficult to determine. This much is certain, however, that during the struggles of the various sectaries for civil and religious liberty, which took place in the 16th century, we find the Baptists occupying a position of some importance, and at the beginning of the 17th century we find them enumerated among the Congregationalists, forming societies and meeting regularly on stated occasions for devotional exercise. From that time until the present, with various degrees of success, they have sustained themselves in unbroken continuity as one of the Nonconforming bodies of the Congregational order.

bridge, following the example of the Independents, endeavoured to establish a position in Ashton, but meeting with little sympathy and support they abandoned the idea. Subsequently a small band of Scotch Baptists opened a place of worship in George street.<sup>(2)</sup> Once more the General Baptists from Stalybridge determined to open a place of worship in Ashton, and met for some time in a small room in Wood street, behind the Spread Eagle Inn.<sup>(3)</sup> The society in Welbeck street was originated by the Lancashire Itinerant Society, which deputed Mr. Lister, of Liverpool, to visit the town, and report to a subsequent meeting concerning the prospect of establishing a new cause in Ashton. In April, 1835, it was decided that the Rev. John Aldis and others, should visit the friends and endeavour to open a mission room.<sup>(4)</sup> Subsequently Mr. Aldis commenced preaching once a fortnight on week evenings in the Temperance Coffee House, and many Baptists favourable to the object attended from the surrounding district. Various attempts were made to find a suitable place of worship, but in vain. Search was made for a plot of ground for building upon, but proved a failure, owing to the objectionable clause forbidding the erection of dissenting chapels, which the Lord of the Manor caused to be inserted into his leases. At that time there was a small room, known as the theatre, belonging to the Gas Company, in Oldham road, and the committee entered into negotiations with the agent of the company, with a view to leasing the same. On examination it was found that, by some oversight, the objectionable clause

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- (2.) Amongst these were Mr. and Mrs. Hay, father and mother of Mr. George Hay, late of Bank Top Academy. These Scotch Baptists continued meeting in different parts of the town with varying success until 1866, when they finally broke up, their last meeting place being an ante-room in the Oddfellows' Hall, Stamford street.—*Ashton Baptists*, by Jas. Kelsall.
- (3.) It is most probable to this society that Mr. Jas. Kelsall refers. Quoting from a small scrap of paper in his possession, he says:—"First Baptist Committee Meeting, September 30th, 1833. Prayer by James Warehurst. 1.—The persons appointed to manage the school till Christmas, are James Warehurst, Samuel Woolley, James Wild, R. Robinson, and William McCulloch. 2.—There shall be two superintendents, one for the morning and one for the afternoon."
- (4.) Previous to the year 1835 a number of people connected with the Independent body, held strongly the opinion that believers ought to be baptised. Amongst the number was the late Robert Robinson, John Johnson, and others. This led to considerable disputation. The controversy was carried on for some time, when the Baptists left, and commenced holding week-evening meetings, conducted by the Rev. John Aldis.

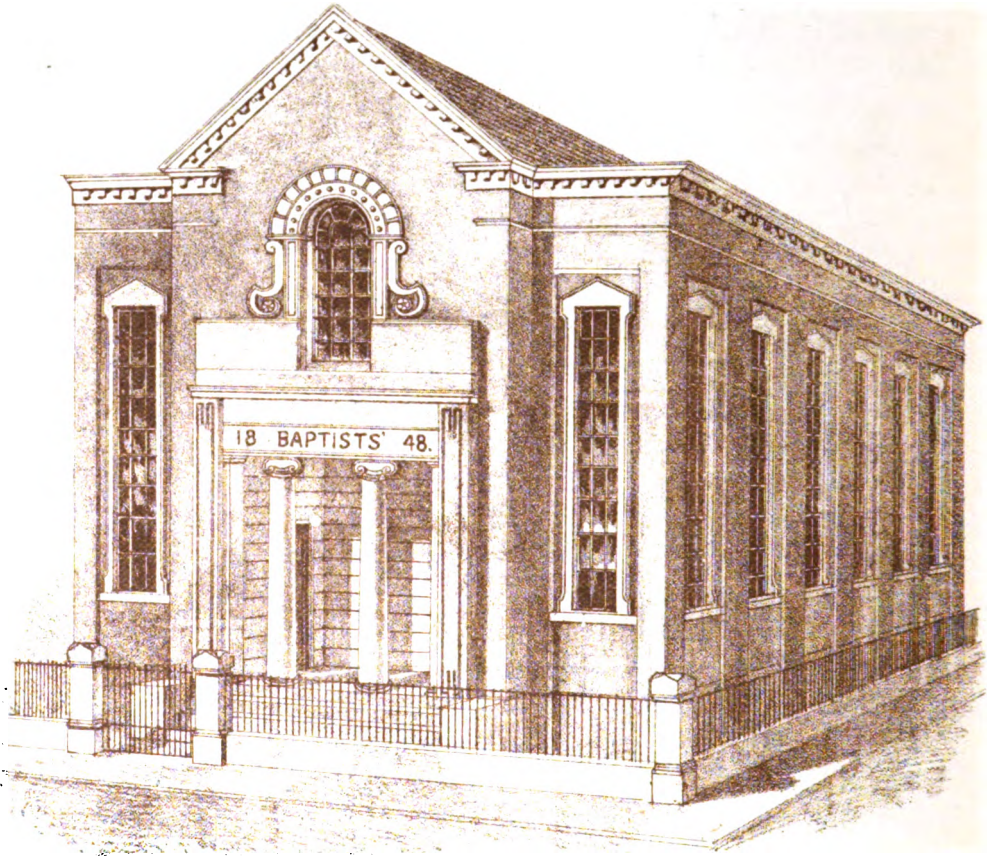
already referred to had been omitted from the lease, and consequently the company let the premises for seven years at a rental of £30 per annum, and on Sunday, September 20th, this place was opened for Divine worship, when Dr. Steadman, of Bradford, preached in the morning from 1st John, 3rd ch., 8 v. The Rev. John Aldis took the afternoon and evening services, his texts being John 3, 30 v., and Luke 10, 42 v. The collections amounted to £50, which, together with £112 subscriptions, placed £162 at the disposal of the little society, their liabilities amounting to £258. Mr. Buck supplied the pulpit as evangelist for six months, during which time letters of dismission were obtained from those churches with which the friends had hitherto been identified, and these with two persons who had withdrawn from the Independents, and a new convert, formed the first communion. On Sunday, January 17th, 1836, after being baptised by Mr. Buck, they solemnly covenanted together that on the following Sunday they would publicly recognise each other as brethren. They further agreed to receive into fellowship several whose dismissions had not been received, also one of the Scotch Baptists. Thus on the following Sunday, January 24th, they met for the first time as a distinct society. The Rev. J. Allison, of Ogden, preached in the morning, and in the afternoon the right hand of fellowship was given to the new church. Having selected the deacons, the Rev. John Aldis addressed the members, and concluded by administering the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.<sup>(5)</sup> During the seven years the church met for worship in the theatre, it had three ministers. The Rev. David Marsh held the pastorate from July 3rd, 1836, to January 12th, 1841; Rev. S. W. Stone succeeded him, and resigned March 2nd, 1843, and was followed by the Rev. W. Giles, whose decease in December, 1845, once more caused the

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(5) About this time the Baptists meeting in Wood Street came over in a body to the new church in Oldham road.—“*The Ashton Baptists*,” The first members of the new church, as recorded in the minute book, are as follows:—Thomas Sudlow, Elizabeth Sudlow, James Furness, Robert Buckley, Sarah Buckley, Mary Broadbent, Peter Platt, Mary Platt, Thomas Mottram, Mary Gill, Ann Billington, W. Jenkins, Sarah Wood, S. Todd, Mary Todd, Mary Jones, John Dyson, — Hanson, John Johnson. The following were chosen first deacons—R. Buckley, Thomas Sudlow, and John Johnson.



pulpit to become vacant. On the 25th of June, 1846 the foundation stone of the new chapel in Welbeck street was laid by Henry Kelsall, Esq., of Rochdale. In February, 1847, the Rev. Alexander



*Baptist Chapel, Welbeck Street*

Pitt accepted the pastorate. The new chapel was opened on the 19th January, 1848. Two months after the opening, the Rev. A. Pitt resigned the oversight of the church, and was succeeded in May, 1849, by the Rev. Jas. Macpherson, who vacated the pulpit in September, 1852, and was followed by the Rev. W. K. Armstrong, B.A., who laboured with great success, but resigned in

January, 1862, and subsequently became the Editor of the *Ashton News*. The prosperity which had been witnessed during the pastorate of the Rev. W. K. Armstrong, was followed by a period of almost overwhelming difficulty and trial. The season of prosperity which the county of Lancaster had witnessed prior to the year 1862, now lapsed into commercial stagnation, popularly known as the Cotton Famine. So poor did the church become that had it not been for the efforts of Mr. Wm. Stokes, who undertook to supply the pulpit for eighteen months, combining the office of agent to the Peace Society and that of pastor, the struggling church might have lapsed, but by his energy he succeeded in keeping the members together through the terrible crisis. After various fortunes the Rev. James Hughes was called to occupy the pulpit, and after eight years ministry he tendered his resignation in September, 1873. In August, 1874, the Rev. Andrew Bowden accepted the pastorate. During his ministry the present spacious schools were erected at a cost of over £1,300.<sup>(6)</sup> After a faithful ministry of nearly ten years he vacated the pulpit on the 26th of March, 1884, and was followed by the Rev. Thomas Maine.<sup>(7)</sup>

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- (6) The following is a description of the new school, from the designs of Messrs. H. and J. Lindley: On the ground floor there are six classrooms, each about ten feet square, and a lecture room 25 by 22 feet, with a stone staircase leading direct by two entrances, one from Hodgson street and the other from the school yard, to the school room on the first floor, which measures 54 by 30 feet. A separate staircase leads from the ground to first floor for the use of choir and infants only. The infant room takes the place of former lecture room on the first floor, which is very spacious, and is well adapted for the purpose. There are in all five entrances, which would become very valuable means of exit in case of fire; and there are windows all round the lecture rooms and class rooms. The lecture room has two entrances from the corridors. Mr. Jabez Gibson, of Dukinfield, was the contractor.
- (7) Among the most active supporters of the church up to the present time, may be mentioned John Johnson, Edward Lees, Simpson Todd, James Wild, Samuel Woolley, Hugh Fultor, James Bottomley, J. D. Smith, Thomas Warren, James Warehurst, William McCulloch, and John Hinds.
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## THE JOHANNAS.

Johanna Southcote was born in Devonshire about the year 1750. Until her fortieth year she was employed as a domestic servant at Exeter. About this time "she joined the Wesleyan Methodists, and became acquainted with a man named Sanderson, who laid claim to the spirit of prophecy," a similar notion being imparted to Johanna.<sup>(1)</sup> In 1792 she made her *début* as a prophetess, and created quite a sensation by her claim to work miracles, and by the sale of sealed packets which were "to ensure everlasting bliss hereafter to the purchasers." Growing bolder in her pretensions she announced herself as having conceived the second Shiloh. On the night on which the accouchement was predicted to take place, crowds of her followers assembled before her house to hear the first announcement of the desired event, but were most bitterly disappointed to learn that she had been labouring under a strong delusion.<sup>(2)</sup> At her death, which took place in 1814, it was ascertained that she had been suffering from dropsy. Her followers were confounded and some fell away, but many clung tenaciously to her prediction, notwithstanding her decease.<sup>(3)</sup> After her death several persons claimed to possess the prophetic gift, consequently the believers had considerable difficulty in deciding to whom they should give their adherence. In Ashton, one of the strongholds of the believers, they admitted the claims of two persons, named George Turner and William Shaw, and subsequently they transferred their allegiance to John Wroe.<sup>(4)</sup>

(1.) *Reminiscences of Mottram*, by W. Chadwick.

(2.) She declared that if she was deceived, she had, at all events, been misled by some spirit, either good or evil.—*Ibid.*

(3.) They believed that she would have a speedy resurrection, and become the Mother of the Messiah.

(4.) He was born at Bowling, near Bradford, Yorkshire, on September 19th, 1792. His father was a worsted manufacturer and owner of some coalpits, and put his son John to all kinds of drudgery, and kicked him about. Wroe's father always called his son Tom Bland, after an idiot in Bowling Workhouse.—*Ibid.*

This man was remarkable on account of his extravagance and eccentricities. In his journal he states that in the winter of 1817, upon thinking of the conduct of his brother Joseph, and the losses he had sustained through him, he determined to kill him, and for this purpose he procured a pistol, and set off to go to his house, but before he went he wrote on a piece of paper a portion of the 55th Psalm, which he intended to have put under his door, and to give him time to read it, and then shoot him through the window, but in this he failed and gave up his intention. In 1819, after rallying from a fever, he announced that he had been favoured with several visions, the first of which was on the 12th of November. He informed the believers that during these visions it had been revealed to him that the believers in Johanna Southcote were perfectly right, and that she was the woman spoken of in the revelation of the Apostle John,<sup>(5)</sup> for he had seen her transfigured before him with the child on her left arm, and that he had received a commission to the Jews. During this time George Turner had been busy in Yorkshire, and had proclaimed to the general consternation of the people that Shiloh would appear on the 14th of October, 1820. In that year Wroe met Turner at Bradford, and after an altercation, Wroe announced that it had been revealed to him that Shiloh would not appear. It need scarcely be added that Wroe's prediction proved to be the true one. But even a prediction of such a questionable character as this was used to support his claim to superiority over Turner. Wroe first visited Ashton on Christmas Day, 1822. The believers assembled at that time in a meeting house in Charlestown. To this place, therefore, Wroe repaired, and startled some of the believers who were expecting him by his strange appearance.<sup>(6)</sup> Thereupon a division arose among the brethren.<sup>(7)</sup> The committee in London refused

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(5.) Rev. xii. chapter.

(6.) *Reminiscences of Mottrism*, by W. Chadwick.

(7.) Nearly the whole body in Ashton subscribed to their belief in the visitation of the Spirit of God to John Wroe. A few held out for some time, and still a smaller number at Fails-worth withdrew themselves entirely from the Ashton body, but continued to correspond with the London committee, which had been in existence when Johanna Southcote was living.—*Ibid.*

to acknowledge Wroe, and in consequence the believers in Ashton ceased to correspond with the committee of believers in the Metropolis. On the 6th of March, 1823, "Robert Blackwell, of Ashton, was anointed in the presence of the assembly of the Lord's children to prophecy to all kingdoms, states and people upon the earth." In September following Wroe was publicly baptised in the River Medlock, near Park Bridge, Bardsley, and when he came out of the water he stood with one foot over the water and the other on land, and said "I swear by Him that liveth for evermore, there shall be time no longer."<sup>(8)</sup> Shortly after, he conceived an idea of converting the ministers of other denominations in the town. Accordingly he paid a visit to the Rev. George Chetwode, rector, and endeavoured to interview both him and Mr. France, the curate. He next turned his attention to the Rev. John Hutchinson, vicar of St. Peter's, and finally called upon the Rev. Jonathan Sutcliffe, but finding that he was away from home at the time, he returned again about a fortnight after. In all the cases he was entirely without success.<sup>(9)</sup> On Sunday, December 28th, Wroe made application to preach in the Methodist New Connexion Chapel, but was refused.<sup>(10)</sup> This refusal was followed by the publication of two very pretentious communications, one to the Dissenters and the other to the Roman Catholics, both of which proved unsuccessful in working the desired effect.<sup>(11)</sup> On Saturday evening, April 17th, 1824, at six o'clock, the believers assembled in a new building belonging to Messrs. John Stanley and Henry Lees, and after service John Wroe was publicly circumcised in the midst of the people.<sup>(12)</sup> The day following Wroe preached in a field adjoining the building, and during his remarks

(8.) *Reminiscences of Mottram*, by W. Chadwick.

(9.) The Rector asked Wroe who had sent him, and he replied "That God that appeared to Moses in the bush." The door was opened, and Wroe took the hint and withdrew. Mr. Hutchinson, after thanking Wroe for his advice, also showed him the door, but Mr. Sutcliffe, after listening to his rambling remarks, fetched the Bible, and argued the point with him, after which they parted amicably.—*Ibid.*

(10.) *Ibid.*

(11.) The Catholics were enjoined to cast down their crucifixes under a threat, purporting to come from the Almighty, that if they were disobedient He would burn down their houses and their images with them, and the dissenters were commanded to be baptized "for the redemption of soul and body."—*Ibid.*

(12.) *Ibid.*

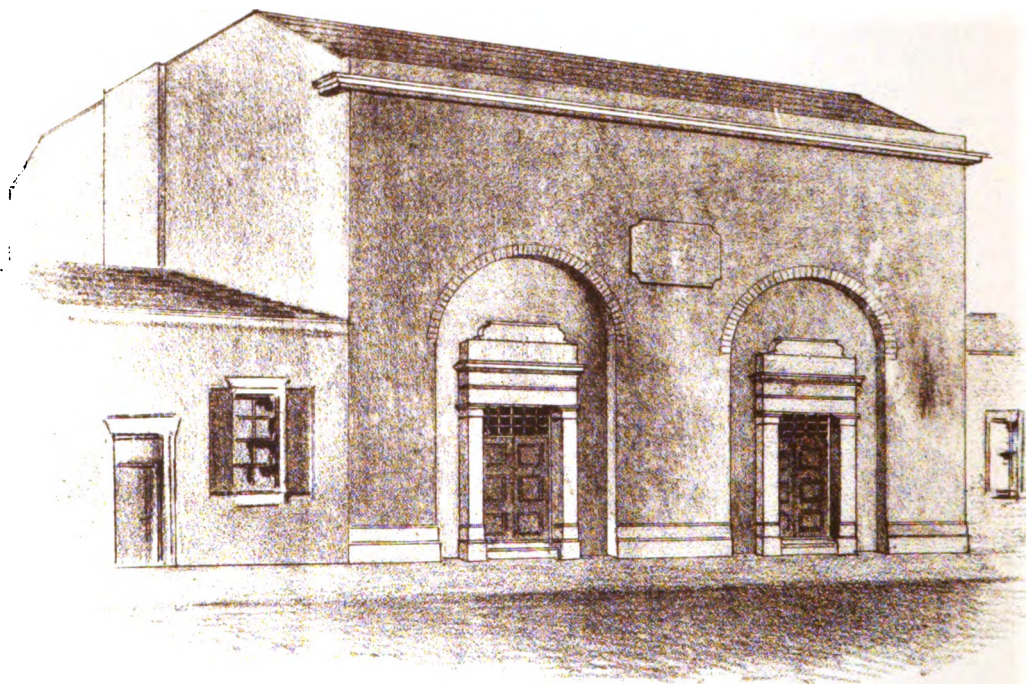
predicted that a light should break forth from the place upon which he was then standing which should enlighten the whole town. This prediction would have been fulfilled in a practical manner, inasmuch as the Ashton gasworks were afterwards erected in that very field, had he not added, that this light was "to enlighten the Gentiles," clearly indicating that it was not the introduction of gas to which he was referring.

In September, 1824, a circumstance occurred at Hurst which developed the prejudice the people of Ashton then entertained towards the Johannas, and caused the greatest excitement throughout the whole neighbourhood. A child was circumcised when eight days' old, and a few days after died. Public opinion at once pointed to the circumstance as the cause of death, and Mr. Ogden, surgeon of Ashton, was ordered to examine the body, and not being able to find any satisfactory cause of death, he attributed the decease of the child to the part upon which the operation had been performed, which had mortified. The father of the child was put in confinement, and an inquest was held on the body before Mr. Milne, the county coroner. Several people were examined, but only a few were present when the operation was performed. Each one was asked if he had been circumcised, and answered in the affirmative. They all declined, however, to tell who had performed the operation upon them. The jury were unable to agree to a verdict upon the first occasion, and an adjournment took place to the Commercial Inn, where a verdict was passed of manslaughter against a gentleman residing in Ashton. He was taken into custody, and conveyed to the county gaol to take his trial. The week following he was admitted to bail until the assizes, then six months off. In March, 1825, he was tried at Lancaster, and was acquitted, owing to some portions of the medical testimony not being quite conclusive. Nevertheless, the gentleman who so narrowly escaped punishment, afterwards circumcised many more.<sup>(13)</sup>

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(13.) *Reminiscences of Mottram*, by W. Chadwick.

It was during this year 1825, that the Sanctuary, now known as the theatre in Church street, was built. The cost of the building was about £9,500, which was entirely defrayed by a wealthy member of the society named John Stanley, who at one period of



*Wesleyan Sanctuary, Church Street.*

his life had been a mechanic. In return for Mr. Stanley's munificence, Wroe prophesied that the donor would become one of the wealthiest men in Ashton, and it is only just to add that Mr. Stanley's success in life subsequently was most extraordinary. This building, which was of the most unique character, has been described as follows :—

The galleries and all other furnishings of the chapel were wholly constructed of St. Domingo mahogany, the floors being well polished, and the

seats made of oak. On each side of the chapel was a pulpit rising from the ground to the height of the galleries. At first the musical portion of the services were singing, and the performances of twenty to thirty persons upon a great variety of wind instruments. These, however, had to give way to the introduction of a fine-toned ornamental polygonal organ, of the value of 600 guineas. Each side of the organ was supposed to represent one of the twelve tribes of Israel. The pews on the ground floor were half circular, and the whole place was lighted by two very large glass domes. The outside of the building was of brick, without windows. Over two of the three entrances were stone slabs on which were inserted some Hebrew characters, while on the other was the inscription 'Israelite Sanctuary.' The whole building was plain outside, but beautiful inside, and altogether furnished a good illustration of what a single individual can do for the religious faith he espouses.<sup>(14)</sup>

Charges of a very serious nature were now frequently made against Wroe, and they came to a crisis in 1830. In that year he was brought to trial before a jury of the body in reference to his alleged immoral conduct. The trial took place in a house now commonly known as the Odd Whim, not far from the Ashton barracks, in Mossley road. The trial was adjourned to the following day, when two of the jurymen named James Smith and W. C. Masterman were replaced by two others because they were said to be determined to act contrary to the rules of the court. A fight ensued and some of the jury were expelled. The remainder sat for six days, and in the end acquitted Wroe of the specific charges, but it is recorded that a "laxity of right principles was disclosed in reference to the subject of the charges. Wroe left Ashton the same night for Huddersfield, where, on the 14th of January, he alleged that he had received a communication from the Lord to stop out of Ashton till the indictment was removed."<sup>(15)</sup> Another incident, illustrative of the depth of public feeling against Wroe, and the believers, as they were called, is recorded as follows:—

On Saturday, the 26th of February, Wroe once more returned to Ashton, and on the Sunday morning, the 27th, spoke in the Sanctuary to the friends, and also to many of those who had the city mark—the beard. In the afternoon he was to speak to the public in the same place. The excitement was intense,

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(14.) *Reminiscences of Mottram, &c.*, by W. Chadwick.

(15.) *Reminiscences of Mottram, &c.*, by W. Chadwick.

for during the previous week bills had been issued, signed by W. C. Masterman and Samuel Walker, lately believers in Wroe's power as a prophet, stating that he stood convicted of lying, perjury, and other worse crimes, on the evidence of females, and at the close of his preaching that day a catalogue of his crimes and impositions would be read over, and he would be asked to answer them. The Sanctuary was therefore crowded to excess with people of all ranks, including two magistrates and many leading men of the town, and a few soldiers. After Wroe had preached the charges were read against him, but instead of replying to them he went down out of the pulpit very suddenly, and the people supposed he was trying to leave the Sanctuary. Thomas Spencer, who had been a believer, cried out 'What, are you running away?' and Silas Lee and a number of others attempted to prevent him, when a fight ensued between the public and the believers, and many were knocked down. Some of Wroe's friends pushed him into a room under the singing gallery, the floor of which was not finished. The people pressed towards the place where Wroe had disappeared, but he got out by some means or other, one party alleged that he had made his escape by the back door and up a flight of steps, but the other party declared it to be by divine agency. Shouting, brawling, and attempts to make speeches followed, producing an indescribable scene. Books were made into missiles to hurl at the believers' heads, pews were broken, and pieces made into weapons of offence and defence, the doors and windows were also shattered, and the damage done was very considerable. On the following day a large mob, consisting of colliers, labourers, and others were in search of Wroe, and in the afternoon they received an intimation that he was at the house of William Skin, the Odd Whim. Thither they proceeded as fast as possible, and various manœuvres were tried to find him, but they were not successful. Silas Lee tried to get inside the house when he received from the master a violent blow on the head with a poker, which caused a torrent of blood to flow from the wound. A general riot was the result and much mischief was done. Then came a mighty cutting of beards, and from that time Johannaism commenced a downward career.<sup>(16)</sup>

Two months after this event the town was again disturbed by another visit of Wroe, when he succeeded, after much rioting, in getting away once more without suffering personal injury. The believers now began to think it best to prepare for the dark possibilities which might lie before them in the uncertain future. It was determined, therefore, to remove their printing press to a place of greater safety. Of this event, which created great

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(16.) *Reminiscences of Mottram, &c.*, by W. Chadwick.

excitement in the neighbourhood, we have an interesting description :—

On the following morning a number of the believers from Ashton and elsewhere; amongst whom was a band of musicians, left the town with the printing press of the society. It was drawn by four beautiful black horses, with uncut manes and tails, belonging to Mr. Stanley. The Lord's Prayer in Hebrew was repeated in the streets, and several chants were given, accompanied by the musicians. Wroe had directed them to be at the place where his trial took place, at sunrise, and as he was going with William Skin, before the body moved with the press, they saw Masterman and Spencer at their heels. The former siezed hold of Wroe by the collar, and a person told him to knock his head off, which caused Wroe to inquire what good it would do. Many more arrived at the spot, when Wroe preached to them, and those who had followed to stone him are said to have returned ashamed.<sup>(17)</sup>

After this event Wroe did not visit Ashton again for some years. He eventually ended his days in Australia, where he is reported to have died in 1863, in the 82nd year of his age. Since his decease the Johannas have suffered in numbers, but have become more influential, having been fairly successful in their business enterprises. They are altogether a different class of men to the Wroe followers—being good and honourable members of society. They adopted the co-operative principle of opening shops for the supply of good articles to their community or to the public, and it is stated that some years ago they had two shops in Ashton, over the doors of which was inscribed "The Israelites' shops," but the public persisted in calling them "The Johannas' shops." They have always been characterised as "fair and honest dealers," and notwithstanding the fact that Friday nights are generally very busy nights with other tradesmen in the town, they insisted upon closing their doors punctually at six o'clock, in accordance with their ideas as to the time the Sabbath really should commence.

Among many other peculiar notions which have been attributed to these people is one which they conceived some years

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(17.) *Reminiscences of Mottram, &c.*, by W. Chadwick.



ago, namely, that "it was desirable to have a city for the believers to dwell in, and of all other places Ashton was most favoured." The city boundaries were defined, and houses erected for the gates, which still remain. One is situated near Ashton Barracks on the Mossley and Ashton turnpike road, and is known as the Odd Whim publichouse; another is situated at Waterloo, just off the turnpike road to Oldham; a third stands on the road to Manchester, about one mile from Ashton, while the fourth was built in the neighbourhood of Dukinfield Hall. These gates of the temple of the children of Israel were erected in accordance with the peculiar notions of the Johannas with respect to the materials, and cost a considerable sum of money. It has been stated that it was also the intention of these peculiar people to erect walls from gate to gate, in order that the city might be thoroughly in the hands of the believers, had not Providence ordered it otherwise by the disturbance in 1831, causing a gradual falling away of the brethren; and consequently the plan was abandoned. At one time some of the wealthy families in Ashton belonged to this body, and it is stated that in consequence of several gentlemen being obliged to attend Manchester Exchange a special dispensation was granted them whereby they were permitted to shave their beards; in due time, however, an equality in beards was proclaimed, and all had either to wear them or keep outside the favoured few.<sup>(18)</sup>

The following is a brief outline of the doctrine professed and taught by them, formulated by one who had a very intimate acquaintance with them. They believed that God still spoke by prophets, that the devil was the author of all mischief, and that the Son of God would again appear on earth, when the devil would die, and all evil would cease with him, after which the mortal body would put on immortality, and universal happiness would reign on earth for ever. They conformed to the Mosaic laws, the men not only wearing beards but sanctioning circumcision. They attached much importance to the numbers 12 and 7. The seven days of the week were believed to represent 7,000

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(18.) *Reminiscences of Mottram, &c.*, by W. Chadwick.

years. There were to be three dispensations of 2,000 years each from the formation of the world. The end of this state of things on earth was to be brought about quite suddenly by the appearance of Christ, when the elect—144,000 persons selected in equal numbers from each of the twelve tribes of Israel—were to reign with the Lord on earth for 1,000 years, when everything on earth would be as perfect as before Adam fell, which was designated the Millennium. They were very peculiar in their notions of what they should eat and drink and the vessels they should use, as well as the style of clothing they should wear. Animals which did not chew their cud were not to be eaten, neither fish which had not both fins and scales, while the blood of animals was most strictly forbidden. The females dressed in a manner which set the fashions of the time at defiance. They were only allowed to use certain colours, red, scarlet, yellow, and black were prohibited, while green, blue, and drab were their favourite colours. Articles of apparel of mixed materials were not allowed. Silk dresses were sewn with silk, lined with silk or linen, the trimmings also being of a prescribed material. The underclothing was to be of linen, and the stays of a given style. They were only allowed to wear one skirt at a time, and that generally of coarse linen, in some instances twelve or sixteen yards were used in a skirt. Their dresses were also peculiar, and their bonnets to match. They also wore veils, upon which sometimes there were Hebrew characters or signs worked so as to fall just below the eyes, and on certain great festivals, such as the Passover, both men and women went their way to the sanctuary dressed in white linen. The coats of the men were without collars, and generally made with plain backs, with curiously formed seams up the sides. There were no buttons behind, but in front there were some of silver. The vest was single-breasted, buttoned high up in front. Their trousers nearly straight in the legs, and their hats broad-rimmed, with drab bodies, green under the rims, and invariably of good felt. Their shirts were to be made of linen only, and finished with a frill or ruffle in front. They would not have a picture of any kind

except what was on the coin of the realm, because they considered it contrary to the command, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image."<sup>(19)</sup> In the present day these people are known as "Israelites," and it would appear that they much prefer that designation.

About thirty years ago a discussion on this point was conducted in the columns of the *Manchester Guardian*. During the contention one correspondent, purporting to write with authority, stated "The Israelites, or followers of John Wroe, of Ashton-under-Lyne, are too often termed Johannas, and confounded with the true believers or *bonâ fide* Johannas: there is no connection and little sympathy existing between them. The real Southcottian does not believe in the divine mission of John Wroe, nor does he permit his beard to grow, nor preach publicly, nor dissent or withdraw himself from the services of the Established Church, nor baptise, nor communicate elsewhere; nor does he believe that Ashton-under-Lyne will be the New Jerusalem. As might be expected the old stock of believers and their immediate successors have nearly died away." Notwithstanding the people still insist in calling the Israelites Johannas, and fail to discriminate between the two sects.

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(19.) *Reminiscences of Mottram, &c.*, by W. Chadwick.



*Joseph Rayner Stephens*

### THE STEPHENITES.

The followers of Joseph Rayner Stephens, popularly known as Stephenites, were once both numerous and influential among the working-classes in Ashton and neighbourhood, but, having ceased some years ago to exist as a distinct society, they have now almost died out. When this society reached its zenith, it proved to be more of a political order than a religious institution, notwithstanding the fact that they met on stated occasions for worship and instruction. The author of this society, Joseph Rayner Stephens, was a man of great intellectual power, "educated in all the wisdom of the nineteenth century, a linguist, a politician, a student of social economy, and versed in all the subtleties of logic and metaphysics." He was the son of John

Stephens, Wesleyan minister, who married in the latter part of the 18th century, Rebecca Eliza Rayner. Joseph was the sixth child, and was born in Edinburgh on March 8th, 1805. In 1819, his parents removed to Manchester, and Joseph was sent to the Grammar School, where he became acquainted with Harrison Ainsworth and others, who evinced a love of literature, some of whom afterwards distinguished themselves as popular authors. In 1825, having devoted himself to the work of the Christian ministry, he was received on trial by the Wesleyan Conference, being then in his 21st year, and was appointed to take charge of the Mission Station at Stockholm, Sweden, where he remained until 1830. During his residence on the Continent, he not only distinguished himself as a preacher and linguist, but formed an acquaintance with two persons, one of whom seems to have had considerable influence in moulding his future career. These were Count C. F. de Montalembert, a Catholic peer, and Lord Bloomfield, the latter being at that time the British minister at that Court. The strong attachment which existed between Mr. Stephens and his lordship may be inferred from the statements that Lord Bloomfield "connected him with the Embassy, as his Chaplain, and that Mr. Stephens read prayers daily in his house," and that when illness overtook his lordship, "Mr. Stephens was present, and held his hand as he died." Between Count de Montalembert and Mr. Stephens also a close friendship sprang up, and in after years both espoused the cause of the oppressed, and became the leading spirits in agitations which possessed much in common. Stephens, on his return to England, threw in his lot with the Chartist and Factory Agitators, and Montalembert with Lamennais in Paris, being one of the founders of *L' Avenir*, and later still was closely identified with the Polish and Irish leaders.

In 1829 Stephens was ordained, and in the year following stationed at Cheltenham, and shortly after came to the Ashton-under-Lyne circuit as second minister, and subordinate to a superintendent. Shortly after his settlement in this neighbourhood he began to take part in public demonstrations in favour of

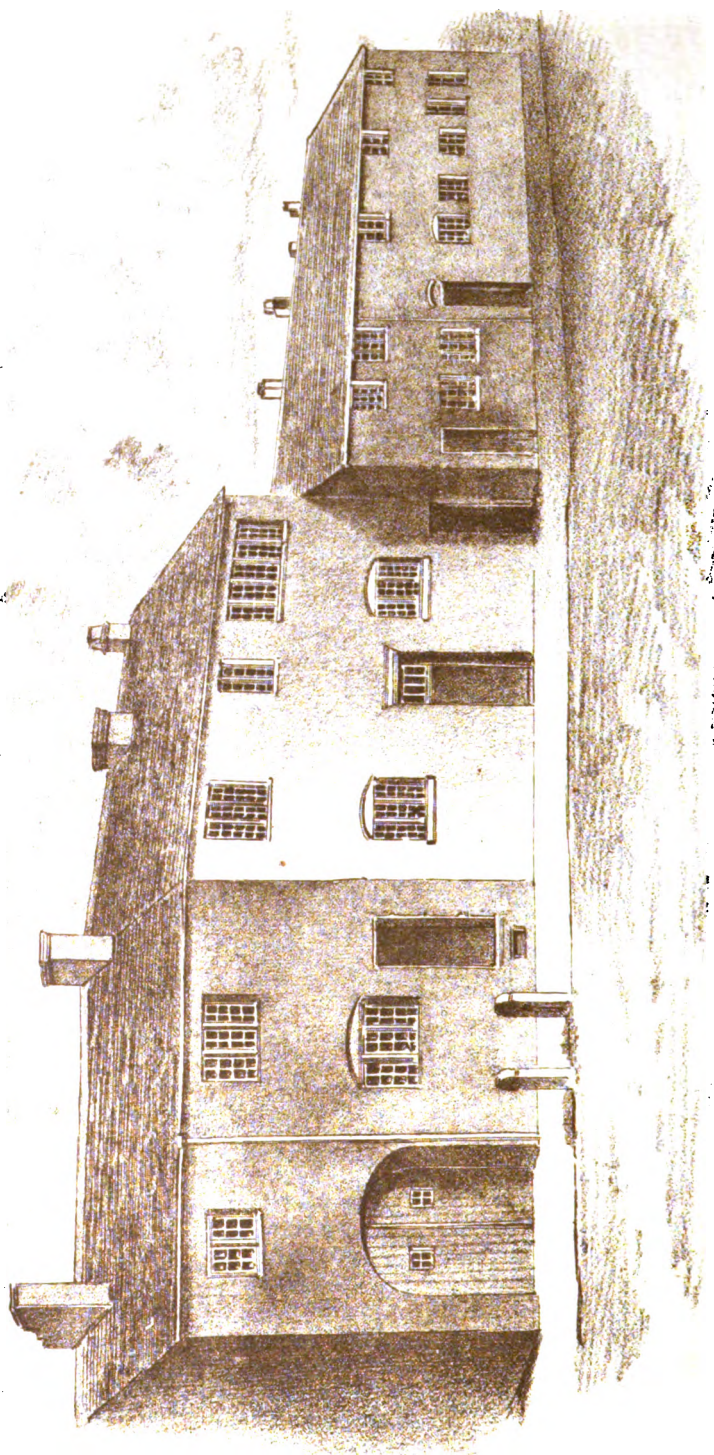
shortening the hours of labour in the factories, which at that time were so protracted that the improvement of the mind was almost impossible. The operatives commenced work at five or half-past five o'clock in the morning, and never ceased work until they left the mill at eight o'clock at night. The pictures of suffering among females and inoffensive children in those days, are amongst the saddest to be found in the annals of any human industry in the world. Among the working classes of that day there was but one feeling with regard to the necessity of shortening the hours of labour. At length the operatives found valiant champions of their cause in Messrs. Oastler, Sadler, and Fielden. To the number of their most ardent and persevering advocates the names of Mr. Charles Hindley and Joseph Rayner Stephens must be added.

In 1832 Mr. Sadler introduced a bill to Parliament to shorten the hours of labour to ten hours per day, which was sent to a committee appointed to consider it, and to collect evidence in support of the proposal, but the cry had gone forth for a Reform Bill, and public attention was absorbed for the time being by that question. At the general election Mr. Sadler lost his seat, first being defeated at Huddersfield and subsequently at Leeds. Mr. Hindley was returned for Ashton in 1835, and consequently was looked up to as one of the champions of the popular cause in the House of Commons. He had not sat long before he drew up a bill to reduce the hours of labour in cotton mills to ten. In order to make his proposals as acceptable as possible to the employers of labour, he suggested that the change should be brought about by reducing the working hours half-an-hour per day each year until they arrived at ten hours per day. But, however favourably the employers were disposed to regard the proposal it fell through, in consequence of the committee of delegates appointed to consider the proposal, on behalf of the operatives, not being able to sanction it. This was soon after admitted to be a mistake on the part of the committee, and caused considerable feeling amongst those who had hitherto desired to help forward the movement, and, consequently, deferred the ultimate success of the cause they had at heart. All through

these changing circumstances Mr. Hindley remained faithful to the principle of the Ten Hours' Bill, and up to this juncture his efforts were ably seconded by Mr. Stephens who, burning with indignation against the cruelty and avarice of the employers of child labour, had plunged into a most heated discussion first with certain local employers, and subsequently with the clergy of the Established Church who sided with the masters. Thus he came to regard the clergy as the perpetuators of privilege, and the enemies of the people, and was most unsparing in the language he used when referring to them. The bitterness of spirit he displayed towards the Establishment and the wild anathemas he hurled at the clergy soon attracted the attention of his more prudent brethren. About this time he was induced to become the secretary of a society, entitled 'The Church Separation Society for Ashton-under-Lyne and District,' the ostensible purpose of which was to wage war on the Established Church and the clergy. His brethren, some of whom regarded his popularity with a jealous eye, while others were alarmed lest he should compromise their society and denomination, took him to task. The result was that he was summoned to the district meeting, where two superintendents and others preferred a rather "colourless charge" against him, upon which he was temporarily suspended. Mr. Stephens, nothing daunted, appealed to the conference, where he fared little better. It was determined, after a rather warm discussion, that having been guilty of very serious indiscretion, he be admonished, and required to renounce the secretaryship of the Church Separation Society; but as he refused to accede to the wishes of the conference it was resolved he should be suspended. The decision of the conference caused great commotion at the moment in some parts of the denomination, but with the lapse of time the feeling seems to have subsided in many of the circuits, except Ashton-under-Lyne, where his formal withdrawal caused a split in the societies of the neighbourhood, hundreds of people rallied around him, and built him a chapel in Ashton, and another in Stalybridge. Thus he formed what were really several politico-







THE OLD WORKHOUSE.





religious societies, the supporters of which were named Stephenites.

We have seen that Mr. Stephens was most strenuous in the support he gave to Mr. Hindley up to the time Mr. Hindley drafted his bill proposing to reduce the hours of labour on a graduation system. Here a crisis arose, and in consequence of some misunderstanding Mr. Stephens resolved to oppose him at the next election. This determination was a great surprise to his relatives and friends, and a comfort to the common enemies both of Stephens and Hindley, whose hopes of success became more sanguine as they beheld the breach in the popular party widened. But whatever were their hopes they were doomed to disappointment. The way in which this adventure was regarded by his family may be gathered from the following entries in his father's diary:—“July 6, 1837.—My son Joseph going to put up for member of Parliament. I think he must be daft.”—“July 27. This day my son J. is a candidate for Ashton-under-Lyne. I can hardly wish him success.” The result of the contest proves how hopeless the struggle on his part to displace Mr. Hindley must have been, and it is difficult to conceive any reason by which he could justify his opposition to so sincere a friend of the working classes as Mr. Hindley. It is evident from the result of the election that he could not possibly expect to succeed, for out of a total poll of 457 he only obtained 19 votes, the remainder being divided between Mr. Hindley, who had 237, and Mr. Wood, who obtained 201.

Whatever prestige he may have lost in this neighbourhood by this reckless opposition to Mr. Hindley, it is clear that he soon regained the confidence of the people and once more reinstated himself in their affections. The circumstance which contributed most to this result was his arrest in 1838, and on this account he was regarded as one of the first and most distinguished martyrs to the popular cause.

For some time previous to 1838 Mr. Stephens had discovered “that without popular power the poor could not obtain redress,” consequently, he became associated with Feargus O'Connor in his agitation for what was known in those days as the “People's

Charter," which embraced five main points—1st, Universal Suffrage; 2nd, Vote by Ballot; 3rd, Annual Parliaments; 4th, The division of the Country into equal electoral districts; 5th, The abolition of the property qualification in members of Parliament, and payment for their services." Both O'Connor and Stephens were most reckless of consequences, and were most unsparing in the epithets they used when referring to those in authority. State officials, local employers of labour, were denounced in the most violent language. O'Connor is described as possessing a "floating recklessness," while Stephens is described as "a fanatic, who possessed a great command of language and great power of declamation." It is further stated that "he was utterly careless of other men's opinions, and paid little or no regard to the feelings of any but those he wished to command; and these were the working people. Over these he domineered, carrying everything he wished with a high hand." To enforce the Charter upon the Government at that time two things were considered indispensable to the success of the cause—a newspaper and a central committee. Accordingly Feargus O'Connor established the *Northern Star* as the organ of the Chartists, to which Mr. Stephens became a very constant and potent contributor. About this time also the *Dispatch* and the *Poor Man's Guardian* appeared, and were circulated freely in Ashton and neighbourhood by the grandfather of Edward Hobson, but this was not done with impunity, for as these two papers were unstamped, Government prosecutions were instituted against the publishers and others for the violation of the Stamps Act, and long imprisonments with confiscation of property, in cases even of vendors, was the result. The feeling in Ashton and neighbourhood was intense, and demonstrations were held at which speeches were sometimes delivered which bordered on sedition. In addition to the establishment of an organ, a "National Convention was elected by the people, whose members were to sit in London, and deliberate on the best means of carrying their desires into effect," and lecturers appointed to "propound the doctrines of democracy."

Dr. McDowall, a surgeon, residing at Ramsbottom, was appointed to represent Ashton at the Convention, and Mr. Stephens became one of the lecturers. Matters were now coming to a crisis in this neighbourhood, and the people longed to give vent to their pent-up feelings. On the 14th November, 1838, it was determined to hold a general meeting at Hyde, "for the purpose of electing a member to the Convention." "I, like many hundreds more," says William Aitken, "went from Ashton and neighbourhood. Certainly it was a scene such as had never been seen in this neighbourhood before, since I knew anything. Hundreds of flaming torches were borne aloft with lantern transparencies, bearing inscriptions of the people's rights and their wrongs. The Rev. J. R. Stephens was one of the principal speakers at the meeting, for which he was subsequently arrested."

This event fully reinstated Mr. Stephens in the popular favour, and he was now regarded as one of the most powerful allies of Feargus O'Connor, and was associated with him in the thoughts of the people as his equal, if not superior, in the advocacy of their cause. At a meeting of the delegates held in the West Riding of Yorkshire, in December, 1838, a resolution was passed declaring that the delegates assembled placed implicit confidence in Feargus O'Connor and the Rev. J. R. Stephens, and in the following year he was received by the National Convention in London, "with enthusiastic cheering, which lasted several minutes." The following is an outline of the leading events, which took place after the Hyde meeting:—

It was on the 27th day of December, 1838, that Mr. Stephens was arrested. The names of the officers employed on this duty have been preserved—Goddard and Shacken. Mr. Stephens was leaving Ashton at the time, and Worsley being the nearest Petty Session to Leigh, Mr. Stephens was then taken there in order to be produced before Lord Francis Littleton, who it was discovered could not act as a magistrate, he not having qualified under Her Majesty Victoria. Goddard and the Magistrates' Clerk, went at half-past five o'clock to find some one in the Commission of the Peace; but . . . returned, after six hours' search, without having found anyone. At midnight it was determined to send Mr. Stephens to the New Bailey, Manchester. Although many people were not likely to be about in the night, two troops of

Dragoons were summoned from Manchester, and arrived on the spot before Mr. Stephen's post chaise set out. Pickets were stationed at convenient distances all the way to Manchester; along which route, guarded by a troop of Dragoons, Mr. Stephens was conveyed . . . A long examination took place on Saturday, the 29th of December, at three o'clock in the afternoon, when it was agreed to liberate Mr. Stephens till the next sitting of the magistrates, upon bail, himself in £500, and two sureties in £250 each. . . . On the 3rd of January, 1839, a further examination was held, when Mr. Stephens was committed to the ensuing assizes at Liverpool, bail being required for himself in the sum of £1,000, and two sureties in £500 each. Bail was accepted the same evening, and Mr. Stephens was discharged from custody. . . Mr. Stephens's trial took place at the Chester Assizes, on Monday, August 15th, 1839. . . . He conducted his defence entirely himself, he cross-examined the witnesses, he discussed questions with the Judge and the Attorney-General, and was at all times clear, relevant, and self-possessed. . . . About a quarter-past nine, Mr. Justice Pattison took his seat upon the bench. . . . Mr. Welsby read the indictment charging the Rev. Joseph Rayner Stephens with 'attending an unlawful meeting at Hyde, on the 14th of November, 1838, seditiously and tumultuously met together by torchlight, and with firearms, disturbing the public peace.' The indictment, in two other counts, charged Mr. Stephens with speaking at that meeting. . . . The Attorney-General, Sir John Campbell, rose and said . . . 'Mr. Stephens, the defendant, took an active part in the assemblage at Hyde, and the question is whether he did not upon that occasion use language to the multitude, which amounts of itself to a misdemeanour, and one of a very aggravated nature. This meeting . . . took place after dark. There was a vast assemblage of people from different parts of the county of Cheshire, and the adjoining county of Lancashire; Ashton, Stalybridge, Dukinfield, and other quarters. They assembled . . . at a place called the Cotton Tree, about a mile and half from Hyde. . . . There assembled, I believe, about 5,000 persons. . . . The leader on that occasion was Mr. Stephens. . . . He mounted the hustings, and addressed the assembled multitude. Amongst other things he told them that he had news for them; that he had been in the barracks, and that the soldiers would not act against them. He said there were several clubs that had bought arms with their burying funds, and that the funds set apart for the purpose of the decent interment of their members were diverted from that purpose, and appropriated to the buying of arms. He asked if they were armed. By way of an answer . . . there was a discharge of firearms. He said 'I see you are ready,' and he wished them 'good night.' . . . There were several bands of music; . . . at midnight torches were seen blazing through the streets of Hyde and on the roads leading into the country, and at last the distant music died away upon the ear.'

During a long and eloquent defence, Mr. Stephens said . . . ' I stand before you guilty of no other crime than that of endeavouring to reconcile the differences that unhappily have existed between the masters and the men ; and never since Ashton, and Stalybridge, and Dukinfield, places that have been mentioned so often in this charge, never since the first stones of these towns were laid has there been so much peace, tranquillity, good-will, and good understanding between the masters and the men as there has been during the seven years of my residence among these people. . . . Gentlemen, it is because five years ago I took up the question of the circumstances and condition of the Factory labourers, forced upon my attention, and the condition of the poor as affected by the Poor-Law Amendment Act, that I stand before you to-day, and it is only in connection with these two questions that I have had anything to do in public. I am guiltless of everything else, and whatever your verdict may be, I have used no talent, no eloquence—I have not attempted to excite your passions, to arouse your feelings, or to awaken your sympathies on my behalf. . . . In your consciences before God, in the face of this Country and of this Court, say whether I am guilty of this charge.

During the cross-examination of Mr. Hibbert, it transpired that Mr. Stephens had said that if there was a rising, he ' would lead them on, and lose every drop of blood in his body in their cause.'

Mr. Justice Pattison, during his summing up, said : ' The object of the meeting might be fairly collected from the banners that were carried, and their inscriptions : ' For children and wife we will war to the knife,' ' Ashton demands universal suffrage or universal vengeance.' The defendant said he was no party in politics, Whig, or Tory, or Radical, or any other description of persons ; that he had nothing to do with Chartism, universal suffrage, or the ballot. If that were so, it was certainly very extraordinary that he suffered himself to be at the meeting where those banners were carried.'

The Jury, after a short consultation, found a verdict of guilty against Mr. Stephens, whereupon, the Judge said :—

' Joseph Rayner Stephens, the jury . . . have found you guilty of attending an unlawful assembly, addressing to them seditious words, and inciting them to provide arms to resist the execution of the law. I am very sorry to have to pass sentence upon any person of your talent and ability, and of your education. The sentence upon you is, that you be imprisoned in the House of Correction, at Knutsford, for the term of eighteen calendar months, and that at the end of that time you find sureties for your good behaviour for the term of five years, for yourself in £500, and two sureties in £250 each.'

On the expiration of this period a presentation was made to him, the meaning and form of which may be gathered from the inscription :—" To the Reverend Joseph Rayner Stephens, who,



for maintaining, in perilous times, the cause of the poor, suffered eighteen months' imprisonment in Chester Castle; this cup (with the accompanying tea service to Mrs. Stephens) was presented by admiring and devoted friends at Stalybridge. George Garside and Abel Williamson unsolicited, took upon themselves on behalf of the defender of the poor, the responsibility of an unconstitutionally heavy bail, which terminated on the day of this presentation.—February 10th, 1846."

The Ten Hours Bill had not been in operation very long before an attempt was made to introduce a Bill into Parliament to change its purpose. This effort was put forth mainly by the millowners, who found that Lord Ashley was not disinclined to support such a measure. Mr. R. B. B. Cobbett states what was the general opinion among the operatives of those days, as to the effect of the measure, as follows :—

1st.—The period of labour of women and young persons is extended to ten hours and a half per day, except Saturdays, and on that day the period of labour is limited to seven hours and a half. Instead, therefore, of labour being limited to ten hours per day, and fifty-eight hours per week, it would be ten and a half hours per day and sixty hours per week.

2nd.—The effect of the proposition is to render working by shifts and relays legal, between six and six, so that women and young persons may be kept at work, or about the mill, for twelve hours per day, with one hour and a half off for meals.

This proposal led Mr. Stephens to take to the platform once more in defence of the operative classes. A large and important meeting was held on May 27th, 1850, in the Corn Exchange, Hanging Ditch, Manchester, to consider how to "counteract the effects of Lord Ashley's treachery." One of the most conspicuous figures in that assembly was Joseph Rayner Stephens. There were also present Lord John Manners, George Banks, the Earl of March, P. H. Muntz, who at that time were all Members of Parliament; Richard Oastler, Samuel Fielden, and W. B. Ferrand. At this meeting passion ran wild, and by men belonging to both political parties, Lord Ashley "was denounced for assenting to compromise the Ten Hours Bill.

For years Mr. Stephens assisted the working classes, not only by his eloquent discourses but by his pen also. His discourses were for a time published in the *Political Pulpit*, which is supposed to have been the production of a reporter. In 1840 *Stephens' Monthly Magazine* was published, and in 1848-9 he edited the *Ashton Chronicle*, and later still he was the editor of *The Champion*.

Referring to his domestic life a relative, writing in August, 1881, says :—

My dear Uncle Joseph could not half do anything—he could fast and pray, or he could eat and work. Sometimes he would rise early and take very long walks; at other times he would sit up and read far into the night, take his breakfast in bed in the morning, and, perhaps, not get up until the afternoon. In company, too, he would oftentimes keep the whole table in a roar of laughter, or, when on a serious subject, in rapt attention; whilst at another time, with different surroundings—he would be still, and seemed to be dull and listless. He smoked much, and Turkish-bathed too much; for years he took these baths five and six times a week, often remaining in the bath, with some friend, for six or eight hours at a stretch. No man I ever knew had so keen a sense of humour in himself; so much solid bearing with brilliant dauntlessness; such intuitive perception, with a faculty of observation as rapid as thought itself. In fine, he was a Seer, with a delicate, sensitive, dramatic temperament, that made him at a moment master of whatever situation he minded to fill. He could influence one mind, or carry away the feelings of thousands of his hearers at his will.

He died Tuesday, February 18th, 1879, and was interred on the following Saturday, in the St. John's Churchyard, Dukinfield. On the stone—the old font once used in his King Street Chapel—is the following inscription:—"In loving memory of Joseph Rayner Stephens. Born March 8, 1805; died February 18, 1879. 'He hath done what he could.'"

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## THE SWEDENBORGIANS.

Previous to the year 1846 a number of persons in Ashton became deeply interested in the study of the works of Emanuel Swedenborg.<sup>(1)</sup> These persons feeling convinced of the truthfulness of Swedenborg's teaching, decided to organise a series of lectures on the subject, and to set their convictions before the public. The first of these lectures was delivered in Stephen's Chapel, Nov. 2nd, 1846, by the Rev. J. H. Smithson, to a large and appreciative audience, and was followed by others equally interesting and instructive. Encouraged by the success of these efforts they resolved to find a suitable room for public worship and instruction. At that time the room, hitherto occupied by the Baptists, at the Gas Works, on Oldham Road, was untenanted, and overtures were made to the committee, which resulted in the room being let for nine months to these people, which was formally opened for worship at the end of December in that same year. This year, 1846, is memorable for the repeal of the Corn Laws, and Mr. E. Moorhouse, a prominent supporter of this little society, and a member of the Anti-Corn Law League, celebrated that event by giving a free tea and entertainment at the formation of the church. During the time the society met in this room it made rapid strides, and was renowned for the interest it took in the work of education in the district. The most prominent supporters of the church at that time were John Dearden, Esq., of

(1.) Emanuel Swedenborg was the son of Jasper Swedberg, Bishop of Skara, in West Gothland, and was born 29th January, 1688. In his twenty-second year he took his degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Upsal. Up to his forty-third year Swedenborg devoted himself to mechanical, scientific, and philosophical pursuits. On his elevation to the House of Nobles by Queen Ulrica, his name was changed from Swedberg to Swedenborg. At the age of fifty-five, he forsook his scientific studies and began his theological writings, which are contained in about seventy distinct works. He died in London on the 29th of March, 1772, in his 84th year. Referring to his divine call, he says:—"I have been called to a holy office by the Lord himself, who most graciously manifested Himself to me, His servant, in the year 1743, when He opened my sight to a view of the spiritual world, and granted me the privilege of conversing with spirits and angels, which I enjoy to this day. From that time I began to print and publish various arcana that have been seen by me, or revealed to me, as respecting heaven and hell, the state of man after death, &c." These people have about 60 societies in Great Britain, seven or eight of which are in London and suburbs. The number of registered members is about 5,000. An annual conference is held in the month of August. They have also a large dépôt in London called the Swedenborg Society which distributes many thousand volumes of Swedenborg's works every year.

Denton, and Mr. Moorhouse, of Ashton. After a few years' labour a misunderstanding divided the church, and the major portion retired to a room in Fleet Street, from which place they removed to their present premises in Katherine Street. This chapel is known as the New Jerusalem Church. The schoolroom was opened on the 14th of January, 1860, and the chapel was dedicated for worship on Good Friday following.

About this time Mr. C. Bradlaugh, popularly known as "Iconoclast," was very active in attacking the Christian doctrine and the veracity of the Scriptures, and coming into conflict with some of the members of this society, a public discussion was arranged for between him and the Rev. W. Woodman, one of their ministers, which created great excitement throughout the whole of the neighbourhood.

In those days the church had increased both in numbers and influence, but during the years which immediately followed, while the cotton panic was at its height, many of the members emigrated, and left the society in poor circumstances.

Since 1870 the church has greatly improved, and is once more in a flourishing condition. There is a day school in connection with this society, with an average attendance of about 200 scholars.

The Chapel and School are built in the Grecian style of architecture, the former accommodates about 250 persons, and cost about £500. There is no resident minister, the pulpit being supplied by visitors from Manchester. The doctrines held by these people are based on elaborate expositions of Scripture contained in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, and the designation New Jerusalem Church is derived from the description of the New Jerusalem given by the Apostle John in the twenty-first chapter of the book of Revelations.

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## Ecclesiastical History.—Roman Catholicism.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

The Valor of Pope Nicholas—Revival of Romanism—St. Ann's Mission—Cotton Famine—"No Popery"—Murphy at Stalybridge—Riots in Stalybridge—Orangemen in Ashton—Riots in Ashton—Hugh Mason and the Mob—Rev. W. J. Crombleholme—St. Mary's Chapel.

**R**OMAN Catholicism was established in Ashton-under-Lyne at a very early date. It is stated that mention is made in the Valor of Pope Nicholas the IV.<sup>(1)</sup> of a chapel dedicated to St. Mary<sup>(2)</sup> in 1291. That the service in what is now known as the Parish Church, was, according to the Roman Ritual until the time of the Reformation, there can be little doubt.<sup>(3)</sup> From that time, however, the service has been according to the ritual of the Anglican Protestant Episcopalian Church, and for many years Roman Catholicism ceased to exist in the parish.

The revival of Romanism in Ashton only dates from the beginning of the present century. The oldest Baptismal Register begins in January, 1823, at which time the Catholics attended St. Mary's Catholic Church, Dukinfield. The first place of worship after the re-establishment of Catholicism in the borough, is said to have been in "a room in Crickety." The first resident priest was the Rev. John Quealy, who took charge of the district in February, 1849, and conducted divine service in an upper room

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(1.) *Vide* p. 152.

(2.) St. Mary's, *Vide* chap. xi. pp. 144—150.

(3.) *Vide* p. 151.



*St. Ann's Roman Catholic Chapel.*

in Wood Street. In 1852 a school chapel was opened in Newman Street, and in September, 1857, the Rev. Wm. J. Crombleholme was ordained priest, and sent to Ashton in 1858, to take charge of

the Mission of St. Ann's.<sup>(4)</sup> "He worked zealously and well. The school chapel was better attended every Sunday, and the number of children in the school increased daily. All went on prosperously. Times were good. The people began to clamour for a church, and the pastor was too ready to encourage them. . . . The new church was scarcely roofed in, when the Cotton Famine came, and with that, stagnation of work, and the ruin of his people." Thus they were involved in very serious difficulties. With perseverance and tact, in which this priest was never wanting, Mr. Crombleholme might have emerged from those dark and troublesome times with comparative ease, had not another unforeseen difficulty arisen.

In 1868 Mr. Murphy, an anti-Romanist lecturer, visited the town, and incited the people to riot and madness by his cry of "No Popery."<sup>(5)</sup> On Monday, January 13th, 1868, he delivered the first of a series of lectures in the Foresters' Hall, Stalybridge. The meeting was an extremely noisy one. Everything was done which human ingenuity could devise by Murphy and his coadjutors to create a disturbance. The tone of his speech and the character of the man may be inferred from the opening sentences of his address on this occasion. On reaching the centre of the platform he raised his right hand, and cried :—

I have not asked for Mayor or Magistrates to protect me. I will protect myself (whereupon he produced a beautifully finished revolver). I'm a queer lad. Would to God I came here the first night. I would have smashed Mr. Hill's pettifogging hall to atoms.—(Applause.) Friends, they have not done with me in Stalybridge.—(Cries of 'Hear, hear.') I know what to say, and say it right. I will give you something hot and heavy before I have done.—

(4.) The Rev. W. J. Crombleholme was born at Chipping, near Preston, on the 28th January, 1825. When eighteen years of age he was admitted into the Order of La Salle. Shortly after he was accepted by Dr. Turner, Bishop of Salford, and was sent to study in the Lesser Seminary of Roulers, in Belgium, where he remained from 1852 until 1855, from which place he went to the "Grand Seminaire" of Bruges, where he studied theology for two years. He returned to Salford in 1857, and the year following was sent to Ashton-under-Lyne.—*Catholic Times*, January 25th, 1884.

(5.) At that time political feeling in Ashton-under-Lyne and neighbourhood was very strong. Passion and prejudice led the various partizans of the two contending bodies to carry their convictions to extreme lengths. All kinds of unpleasant rumours were abroad as to how Mr. Murphy had been induced to visit this neighbourhood, and for a long time after the riots it was customary for one political party to insinuate that the other was responsible for the destruction of property and loss of life which was caused by the rioters.

(A voice : ' Don't be frightened.') I frightened ! If you are not, I am not ; and if we are not worthy of being blown up we ought to be blown down. I am ready for being blown up, and if they blow us up they blow us up to heaven's glory. That is me.<sup>(6)</sup>

From Stalybridge Mr. Murphy came to Ashton, and was the cause of a small riot in the town. The authorities at first thought it more prudent not to give too much prominence to the proceedings by appearing to take notice of them ; but they soon found that such a course could not be followed without danger. The next day, which was Saturday, the town resumed its normal appearance after the riot of the previous day. " Rumours, however, were prevalent that an attack would be made on the Catholic Chapel, and a body of armed men mounted, kept guard, whilst the police kept the thoroughfare clear." During the early part of the evening a body of youths armed with bludgeons and various kinds of offensive weapons made an attack on the building, but they were quickly dispersed and some of their weapons of warfare taken from them.

On Wednesday, April 8th, there was a fresh outbreak of rancorous feeling, and the peace of Ashton and Stalybridge was once more broken. On Sunday a person named Flynn, who had been lecturing in the Foresters' Hall, Stalybridge, commenced a series of meetings in the Old Mill, Charlestown. This was followed by another on the Monday evening, after which a large crowd formed themselves into marching order to escort him home.<sup>(7)</sup> The work thus begun in Ashton was consummated by a riot at Stalybridge on the following Wednesday evening. The Catholic Chapel—which stood on a plot of ground bounded on the west by Springbank Street, on the east by a narrow path and the high boundary wall of Mr. Cheetham's grounds, on the north by Grasscroft Street, and on the south by Brierley Street—was open to attack on all sides, and had been garrisoned by about 200 men, who had sufficient cover within the boundary wall, and who, fearing that the chapel would be attacked, had laid in a good store of

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(6.) *The Ashton-under-Lyne News.* (7.) *Ibid.*



ammunition, "in the shape of stones and brickbats." They had not waited long before the mob arrived.

The gas lights in the neighbourhood were turned off, and a continual fire of missiles kept up on every one who approached. No distinction was made, the police were kept back as well as the crowd. The brunt of the battle was in Brierley Street, where a young man was shot in the face, it was supposed by a priest. . . . This unfortunate act of violence increased the rage of the populace, and it was with difficulty they were restrained from storming the chapel.<sup>(8)</sup>

The next morning a small crowd gathered at the chapel, when the priest "appeared with his gun, and fired it among the people," and once more the people were incited to riot. At this juncture 200 special constables were sworn in. But notwithstanding all precautions the mob continued to assemble in greater numbers in Melbourne Street.

The shops were hastily closed, and strong detachments of special constables marched up and down to break up the density of the mass. This demonstration producing no effect, a number of the constables were ordered to draw their cutlasses and drive back the crowd. . . . Shortly after ten o'clock the confusion and riotous disposition of the crowds appearing to increase, the Mayor proceeded to the Catholic Chapel, where he read the Riot Act. . . . Bills announcing the fact were posted about half-past eleven, and by that time a detachment of the 8th Hussars, and another of the 70th Regiment of Infantry arrived from the Ashton Barracks. During the riot several persons were wounded by stones. . . . About four o'clock the following day (which was Good Friday) 40 or 50 Irishmen from Ashton, armed with loaded pistols, and brandishing bludgeons of almost every description, marched in a body into Stalybridge, and bid defiance to the enemies of the Catholic Church. An alarm instantly spread through the town, and in a very few minutes more than a thousand persons assembled near the Town Hall, and ousted headlong their opponents. A fearful *melee* ensued, the police were unable to stop the affray, and a special messenger was dispatched to Ashton for the Hussars, who immediately started for the scene. . . . They cleared the streets in a short time, but not without determined resistance.<sup>(9)</sup>

On Monday, the 20th April, the Rev. Joseph Daley, one of the Roman Catholic priests, was brought up at the borough police court, and "charged by Reuben Beeley with having, on the 8th instant, fired at and unlawfully wounded him;" and after a pro-

(8.) *The Ashton-under-Lyne Reporter.*

(9.) *The Ashton-under-Lyne News.*

longed trial, the Mayor (James Kirk, Esq.), stated that "The Magistrates had taken the matter into serious consideration, and, though they were somewhat divided in opinion, they had agreed that a verdict of acquittal would be the most proper under the circumstances."<sup>(10)</sup> If the magistrates thought by such a verdict to conciliate the people, or disarm criticism, they were very much mistaken, for on the one hand the Irishmen were determined to resent the insult of arraigning "an innocent man," and especially one of their priests, before a secular tribunal on such a charge; while the Orangemen, on the other hand, declared that the magistrates were traitors, and that justice had not been done. Consequently, both parties, as before, watched for a favourable occasion to avenge themselves. This opportunity arose sooner than they expected, when a riot of the most destructive character ever witnessed in this district broke out in Ashton.

The ill feeling which had existed between the Irish and English for some time previously, was brought to a crisis by a demonstration, held by the Orangemen in Ashton Town Hall, on Saturday, May 9th, when "bands of young men decked out with orange-favours, marched through the town."<sup>(11)</sup> On the Sunday following "the ribbons of the girls were equally conspicuous." Throughout Sunday several free fights took place, but little danger was apprehended. At length the conflict came, and a most disgraceful scene of riot ensued. About a quarter past six on Sunday evening a contingent of Irishmen, numbering from 150 to 200, armed and organised sallied forth.

Their weapons were truly awful to behold—pokers, scythes, one or two sword blades, heavily-loaded bludgeons, bayonets, pitchforks, and revolvers—and the owners of these murderous weapons were in that state of excitement which made them heedless of danger. Certainly the Irish blood was up, and whatever might be the success of the mob in other quarters where there was

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(10.) *The Ashton-under-Lyne Reporter.*

(11.) On Saturday, May 9th, an Orange tea party was held in the Town Hall, when considerably more than 1,000 persons sat down. Before tea a vast crowd assembled in the front of the hall gaily decked with yellow ribbon. There was intense excitement outside during the whole evening. After tea Mr. Booth Mason presided, and addresses were delivered by W. Touchstone, Rev. W. Heffill, the Rev. Dr. Gresham Gregg, of Dublin, and several local gentlemen.

no defence, Hill Street (the Irish quarters) was impregnable. But this formidable band marched up Cavendish Street to Old Street in regular order where, as soon as it came in view of the crowd in Henry Square, a halt was made for the purpose of steadying the ranks. In the Square were many armed with formidable bludgeons, but there was no order. . . . At first a disposition was shown to make a stand at the Friendship Inn, and hold Old Street, but the wild dash of the Irish scattered them, and in a little time as it takes to describe it, the Irish, led up by a formidable fellow named Flynn, had completely cleared the Square, and with a wild hurrah they rushed along. . . . It was not in human nature that such an attack should have been made without retaliation, and accordingly, the mob in Henry Square, which had now re-assembled and grown to huge proportions, began to prepare. Heavy bludgeons painted red, sticks, and broken pieces of hoarding began to be flourished; and about half-past six the police on duty at the bottom of Stamford Street formed themselves across the street in line, and advanced as far as Cavendish Street at the double, followed closely by a mob of about a thousand men and lads. They wheeled down Cavendish Street, and here the impatience of the mob began to break up the array, and the police were mingled with and borne along by the foremost ranks down Cavendish Street, with shouts, and into Hill Street, but their intention of sweeping it from end to end was frustrated. The Irish stood their ground; the women, with their laps full of stones, pelted the attacking party, even little boys of ten years old, crying with excitement, were defending their homes. The police drew their truncheons, and a few broken heads was the result, but the English mob never grappled with the enemy. They executed a strategic movement with the utmost precision, a manœuvre to which a few pistol shots lent additional celerity. . . . . About half an hour after the attack upon the Irish quarters, another mob made its way down Bentinck Street, but were resisted by the police, when they swarmed over Thacker's Ground, and assaulted the houses near Cavendish Street and Charles Street, but beyond the destruction of the windows and of the furniture inside from the stones, no other damage was done. Another great body of rioters passing by the back of the Friendship Inn, went up Back Portland Street, destroying the windows of every house in the row. . . . Then they turned to the Flag Alley, Old Street, from which point the Irish had first essayed. The fight here was sharp, and soon the English mob had full possession.<sup>(12)</sup>

The infuriated mob next broke into the houses. . . . . Doors were smashed open with ponderous pieces of wood, loaded with iron; windows were smashed and bolts shivered to pieces. Entrance having been effected, some of the crowd rushed up stairs, and prefacing their work there by tearing entire windows from their framework, proceeded to demolish every picture

that hung on the walls with sticks. Next the beds, not pulled to pieces, but hacked to atoms, were thrown on the floor beneath ; chairs, tables, and ornaments were pitched out of the windows, and every article of a breakable nature smashed to 'smithereens.' Downstairs, the work of devastation was being carried on even faster, and in a more fiendish manner. Fire irons were converted into weapons by the invaders, and fenders broken to pieces. Men, with huge pieces of iron in their hands, were seen aiming tremendous blows at tables and chairs and pots and pans, and occasionally, amid the triumphant shrieks of the mob outside, a child's cradle found its way into the street, and was instantly kicked to firewood. . . . Pieces of bacon were flying about in every direction. . . . It is a fact that an infant was thrown downstairs. It was laid asleep in bed, and was seized along with the bed clothes and tumbled down stairs. Its cries awoke the sympathies of a lad who was near, and who took it out of harm's way.<sup>(13)</sup>

Between eight and half-past, a great crowd assembled in the neighbourhood of St. Ann's Catholic Chapel, and stone throwing commenced. A number of pistol shots were fired in quick succession from the windows, but as no one was severely hurt the mob increased in boldness. . . . The windows in Cavendish Street were completely smashed in, as were all in Burlington Street, in Mr. Crombleholme's house, where the door and window shutters were also destroyed. At about twenty minutes to nine a violent attack was made upon the door of the chapel in Cavendish Street, and in about ten minutes, . . . the doors were smashed in, and the rioters proceeded to bring out the furniture and break it up in the street. The strong benches resisted their violence, but were finally torn up and some removed to an adjoining open space, where a fire was kindled, and they were speedily consumed. Some attempts were made to light the gas in the chapel, but as that had been turned off and the darkness was not favourable to their operations, the rioters withdrew . . . the building presenting a scene of the most melancholy ruin. . . . Efforts were made to set fire to the chapel, and several of the neighbours were solicited to give a shovelful of cinders for this purpose, but no one could be found to assist in this nefarious act.

The surging crowds next proceeded to St. Mary's Chapel, in Charlestown, but, for some time no attack was attempted, as it was known that the place was defended by armed men within. Eventually a few daring spirits commenced the attack :—

A number of lads went near the yard doors and sent a shower of large stones through the front windows. Instantly in return came the sound of a pistol shot, and a cry was heard that a man was shot. Until now only a lot

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(13.) *The Ashton-under-Lyne News.*

of lads had been engaged in the attack on the chapel, but the shot enraged the men, and filling their hands and pockets with stones, volley after volley was sent clean through the windows among the people inside. Several shots in rapid succession were heard, and one man was shot through the leg. The news spread rapidly among the crowd, and it made them more maddened than before. . . . . In the priest's house the windows and doors were smashed and several figures in the church were considerably injured.

On Monday morning a concourse of about a thousand persons assembled again at St. Mary's Chapel.

Among them were a number of roughs. . . . . Large stones were thrown at the doors and in at the windows for about ten minutes, when a number of leaders getting together near the iron gates in front forced them open, and commenced thundering away at the doors with clogs and bludgeons. Thus they burst opened the doors and scrambled inside. . . . Images were broken, pictures were shattered and other damage done, but almost immediately the police appeared on the spot and most of them decamped.

In addition to this wholesale destruction of property a man, named Darley Dempsey, was killed, and many other persons were seriously wounded.<sup>(14)</sup>

On Sunday night, when the tumult was at its highest point, a body of policemen headed by Mr. Hugh Mason, appeared, and after they had reached the middle of the crowd, Mr. Mason read the Riot Act, and the mob dispersed.

The following proclamation was immediately posted throughout the town:—"Borough of Ashton-under-Lyne.—Notice is hereby given that the Riot Act has been read, and all persons are required to disperse themselves and depart to their habitations, or to their lawful business, upon pains contained in the Act in the first year of King George the First, for preventing tumults and riotous assemblies.—By order of the Magistrates, William Marshall, clerk to the Justices.—Town Hall, 10th May, 1868." But in spite of the authorities the rioting was resumed on the Monday morning following, when more serious damage was done. Consequently it was thought necessary to issue another proclamation to the following effect:—"The magistrates hereby give further notice, that the Riot Act was read last evening, and that the

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(14.) *The Ashton-under-Lyne News*,

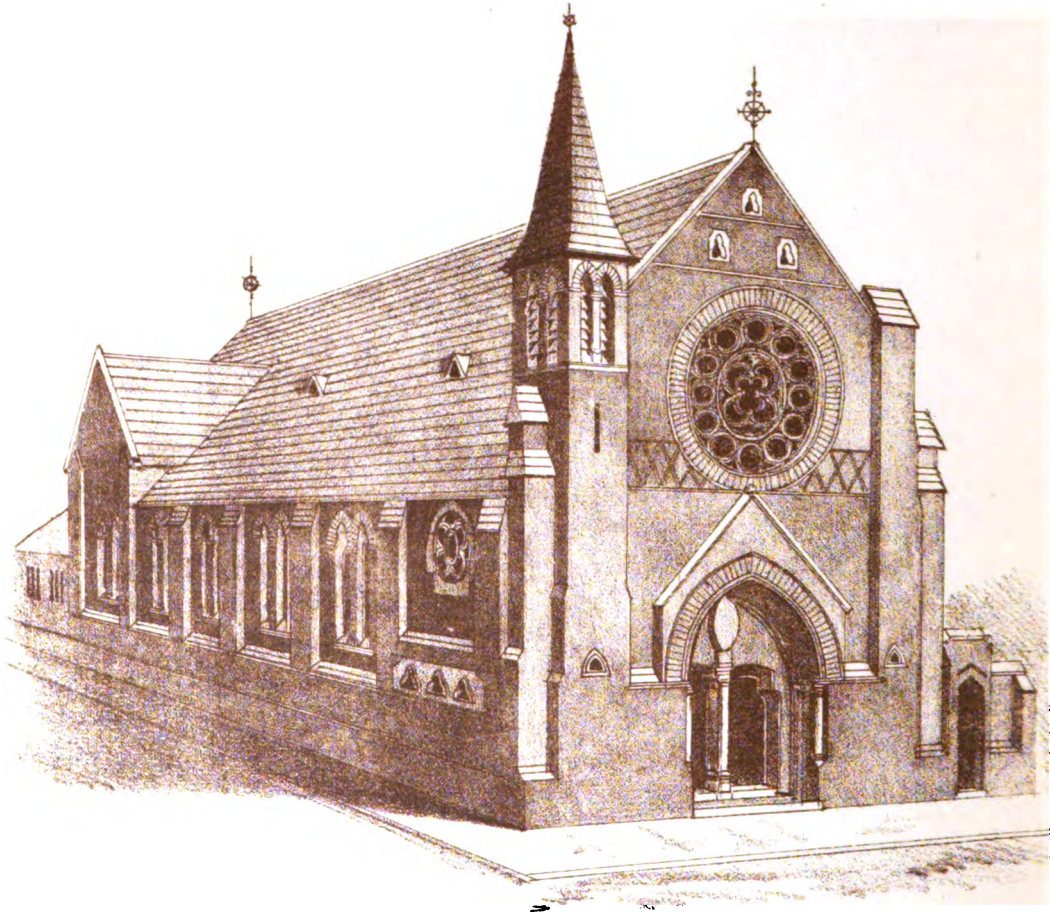
riotous proceedings and excitement continue; and they warn all persons assembling in the streets, and require of them to depart to their habitations or to their lawful business, upon the pains contained in the Act made in the first year of King George, for preventing tumults and riotous assemblies; and the magistrates particularly warn all persons against carrying or using arms or weapons of any kind, and they call upon all the loyal and peaceably disposed inhabitants to discourage all wearing of PARTY COLOURS, and to assist the Justices in preserving the peace of the borough.—By order, &c.” This not having the desired effect, the military was called out to clear the streets.

The Rev. W. J. Crombleholme referring to the riot and its victims, in a letter, says:—“ We were in the centre of the district where these disturbances took place, and we were its chief victims. Our church, school, and presbytery were attacked and broken into, and altars, statues and paintings were burnt; even our lives were in danger. One hundred and eleven homes of our faithful Irish Catholics were gutted; their furniture, clothing and bedding destroyed, and their provisions carried away. *No protection was afforded us by the authorities.*”<sup>(15)</sup> The fact of the matter was that in the beginning of the agitation, “ so little danger was apprehended to the peace of the town that Chief Constable Dalgliesh had gone to Southport to visit a sick member of his family, and the Mayor (Henry Thomas Darnton, Esq.) was out of town at the time.” One thing is certain that everything was done that could be done to cope with a mob of such overwhelming proportions by those on the spot. Inspector Bamforth and his men acted with great courage and discretion, and Mr. Dalgliesh, on his return, proved himself quite worthy of the confidence reposed in him by his achievements, while Mr. Hugh Mason has been spoken of by all parties in the highest terms. There are many persons still living who remember the heroic courage of Mr. Mason, and still think of him with pleasure, standing in the midst of the infuriated Irish mob, trying to conciliate them and seeking to soothe

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(15.) Letter by Rev. W. J. Crombleholme in *Catholic Times*, January 25th, 1884.

those turbulent spirits, while they brandished their weapons within a few inches of his face, and even threatened his life.<sup>(16)</sup>



*St. Mary's Roman Catholic Chapel.*

- (16.) During Monday 500 residents of the town were sworn in as special constables. The men were divided into companies of 50 men, under the command of the following persons :—  
 No. 1 Company—Captain, James Eaton ; Lieutenants, Messrs. Wright Wood, and A. W. Siddall. No. 2—Capt., Charles Brooke ; Lieuts. Messrs. J. Mellor and Jas. Kelsall. No. 3—Capt., John Fletcher ; Lieuts., Messrs. J. Swallow and E. Collier. No. 4—Capt., William Greenall ; Lieuts., Messrs. J. Hadfield and S. Buckley. No. 5—Capt., Thos. George ; Lieuts., Messrs. G. Burrows, Wilson, and Broadbent. No. 6—Capt., Saml. Ashton ; Lieuts., Messrs. Jas. Dean and E. Fisher. No. 7—Capt., S. Thomas ; Lieuts., Messrs. S. Neal and H. Lees.

After the rioting had ceased, the Rev. W. J. Crombleholme, who had been compelled to leave the town, returned, and immediately began to realise the critical state in which he was placed, and the extent of his liabilities. Once more he went to work to set the property in order, and to secure it against further attack. Having done so, he crossed the Atlantic, in order to collect money amongst his friends in America, "to diminish, if possible, the enormous debt which was left on St. Ann's," by which means he was enabled to pay, on his return in 1878, having been absent five years, all the most pressing demands of his creditors. During his absence he visited Rome, and "received extraordinary blessings from his Holiness Pope Pius IX.," who could not refrain from observing . . . . "that no one had ever asked so many holy things from him as this little reverend gentleman." Finding once more that his flock could not help him very much to contend with the "weight of his debt," he obtained leave of absence from his Bishop, and started again for America to solicit his friends to help him once more, and he died there on the 17th of January, 1884. On Saturday, the 19th, the sad news of his sudden death was announced by telegram to the Lord Bishop of Salford.<sup>(17)</sup> On the following Tuesday the clergy of the diocese and a large congregation assembled in the Church of St. Ann, Ashton-under-Lyne, for the Requiem Mass and Absolution. The Bishop, on that occasion, referring to Mr. Crombleholme, said:—"His zeal knew no bounds. He had counted upon resources which failed him at the moment they were needed, and hence he found himself plunged in painful financial difficulties. . . . He was remarkable for a singular disinterestedness of character—he knew not the meaning of comfort, ease, or

(17.) He went from Washington to New York. There he told his friends that, at the house at which he had been staying in Washington, he was one night going to the parlour at a rather late hour, and, mistaking the cellar door for that of the parlour, was precipitated to the bottom of the steps, where he had to remain lying until he recovered himself sufficiently to find his way to the parlour. There was no one up in the house, except a coloured servant, who gave him a little wine. The next morning on going to church he slipped on a piece of ice, and aggravated the shock he had received on the previous night. On the 17th of January, he received a telegram inviting him to visit Lawrence, and instead of remaining quiet started upon the journey. He was taken ill on his way to Boston, and when the train arrived at that city he was carried to the United States Hotel, where he expired.—*Catholic Times*, Jan. 25th, 1884.

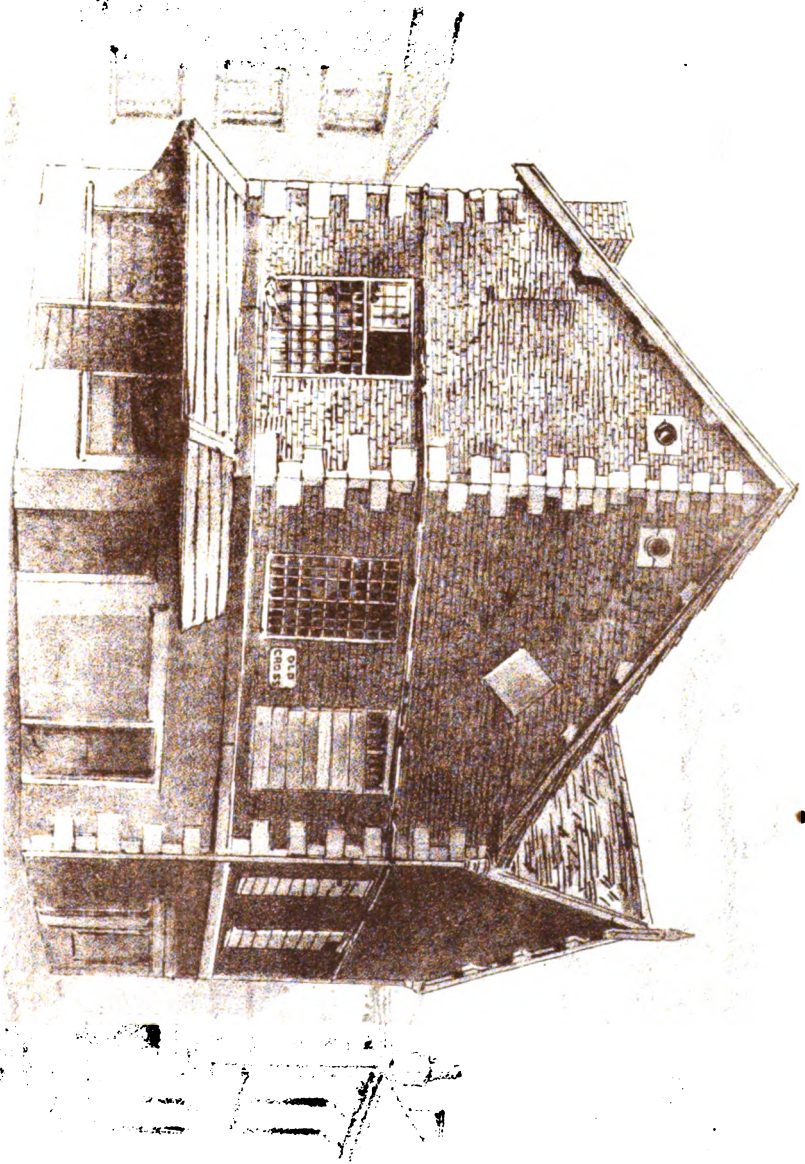


self-indulgence ; and if his disinterestedness and zeal carried him beyond the limit of practical business-like habits, he was never animated by any other intention than that of benefiting souls and promoting the honour of his Divine Master." He was succeeded by the Rev. Robert Smith, who came as a curate to Mr. Crombleholme, and is at the present time in charge of the Mission.

Besides St. Ann's there is another spacious chapel, owned by the Roman Catholics, in Wellington Road, called St. Mary's. This place was originally a branch place from St. Ann's, but is now under the special jurisdiction of a priest. The present chapel is built on the site of the Rev. Joseph Rayner Stephens' Chapel, which was bought from him by the Catholics for £420, and opened as St. Mary's, in April, 1856, the Rev. Lawrence O'Mara, formerly curate of St. Ann's, being the first priest. On the 10th of May, 1868, the chapel, which had been previously garrisoned by the parishioners, was assaulted and taken by the mob, who committed such depredations, that it was afterwards found necessary to take it down and rebuild at a cost of £3,500. It was at St. Mary's that the Rev. J. Beesley laboured with considerable success. The present pastor is the Rev. George Richardson.



OLD TOWN HALL AND COURT HOUSE.





## Court Leet.

### CHAPTER XIII.

Manorial Court—View of Frank-pledge—Domestic Leets—Old Court House—Curious Farm Leases—Notice of holding the Court—Jurymen of the Leet—Charge to the Jury—Mayors of the Manor.

FOR many centuries the Local Government was vested in the officers of the Manorial Court, popularly known as the Court Leet, but more correctly styled the Court Leet and View of Frank-pledge. The term Leet is supposed to refer more especially to the neighbourhood over which the Court had jurisdiction, and was used in the first instance to denote the district within which the free male residents assembled at stated times for preparation for military defence, and for police and criminal jurisdiction. Traces of the latter object still remain. The portion of the title known as *frank-pledge* has been referred to the system of police which Alfred the Great perfected, and which provided that all free-men over twelve years of age should be received into a *tithing*, sometimes called a *visne* or neighbourhood. It was also provided that these free-men should form a society, to consist of not fewer than ten such persons, each of whom should be a pledge or security for the good conduct of the others.<sup>(1)</sup> In illustration of the way in which Frank-pledge operated in those times it is stated that "When a person was accused of crime, his tithing was to produce him within thirty-one days or pay the legal mulct for the offence,

(1.) *Political Cyclopædia*, vol. iii., p. 239.

unless proved on oath that no others of the tithing were implicated in the crime, and engaged to produce him as soon as he was found. For great crimes the offender was expelled from the tithing upon which he became an outlaw." Again, the principal free-man of the ten became responsible for the presentation and fidelity of his co-pledges, and the functions he performed were very similar to those of the head constable, an officer elected by the residents within the tithing at a later date, for the preservation of the peace.<sup>1</sup>

Court Leets, like Ashton-under-Lyne, appear in the first instance to have been granted by the Crown, to holders of Manors, for the purpose of relieving their tenants of the duty of attending the leet of the *hundred*. At this domestic tribunal residents within the leet or district, in olden times, took the oath of allegiance, and the frank-pledges were supervised. The duties in such a private or domestic leet were performed either by the Lord of the Manor himself or by proxy, his steward representing him. It was within the province of the court to repress offences against the public peace, and to enforce the removal of all public nuisances. Formerly all offences which were punishable by amercement could be presented to the court.

Private or domestic leets, such as Ashton-under-Lyne, were held twice in the year, within a month after Easter and Michaelmas. This court has been held from time immemorial in the Manor of Ashton-under-Lyne. In the first instance, like other similar courts, it may have been held in the open-air, according to the custom of olden times, but subsequently it was held in the "Ancient Manor Court House, a curiously formed structure near the Old Market Cross, and believed to have been erected in A.D. 1636, upon the site of a still more ancient edifice, of the same description. This court, which has fallen into disuse in many towns, holds its sittings here every six months; and the numerous amercements which are from time to time made upon the owners of property in respect

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(2.) *Political Cyclopædia*, vol. iii., p. 239.

of dangerous tenements, defective sewerage, and filthy necessities, contribute in no small degree to correct abuses and to punish a class of careless or avaricious landlords, that neither local acts nor common law could really effectively reach.”<sup>(3)</sup> The officers of the late Earl of Stamford and Warrington’s Court Leet in Ashton-under-Lyne consist of a Manorial Steward, Mayor, High Constable, Assistant Constables, Jurymen, Bye-lawmen, Bailiffs, Pounders, Affeerers, Inspector of Weights and Measures, Market lookers, Aletasters, and Bellmen, who are annually appointed at the Michaelmas Court.

In 1844 there were in all about 2,030 tenants within the Manor of Ashton-under-Lyne, from whom the Lord of the Leet received over £30,000 as rent. Referring to the relation which these tenants held by suit and service to the Lord of the Leet, John Ross Coulthart says:—

All the tenants have covenanted in their leases to perform suit and service at the Manor Court, whether they hold under his lordship in fee-farm, on rack rent, or for lives renewable or determinable. His lordship’s farm leases are in many respects curious specimens of ancient feudal tenure; and covenants for free warren, grinding of grain at the Manor mills, keeping dogs for the use of his lordship, and furnishing carts, horses and men when required, ‘with *proper shovels and forks*,’ are still retained, but are very leniently enforced. All his lordship’s rents were made payable half-yearly, namely, on the 25th of March and 29th of September, and they are generally collected, and the Manor Court held, at the expiration of a month from these dates.<sup>(4)</sup>

In olden times the common notice of holding the court is said to have been from three to four days, when the Steward issued a precept to the bailiff of the leet, “commanding him to warn the residents to appear at the time and place appointed for holding the court, and to summon a jury.” In some private leets the notice was given in the church, in others in the market. But in the leet of Ashton-under-Lyne, whatever custom was observed in distant parts, the notice in modern times has been by placard, and summonses issued by the Steward to the jurymen of the leet,

(3.) Report on the Sanatory Condition of Ashton-under-Lyne, by John Ross Coulthart, Esq.

(4.) *Ibid.*  
p. 9.

requiring their attendance. All persons, whether as new jurors, or otherwise, are also summoned.

About nine o'clock in the morning of a Court Day the Leet Steward usually meets the Mayor, Constables, and Jurymen, and receives information and presentments on all subjects affecting the common weal of the residents of the manor. The court is opened by proclamation; the foreman of the jury delivers in a written verdict as to the several offences that have been inspected during the preceding six months, which the Steward reads in a loud voice in the hearing of every one present, and at the conclusion of the reading undertakes, as far as Lord Stamford is concerned, to remedy without unnecessary delay the grievances presented in the verdict. . . . When the Steward has finished reading the verdict, he uniformly directs one of the officers of the leet to call over the names of the suitors, which comprehend the tenants of Lord Stamford, also all the freeholders (or frank-pledgers, as they are anciently called) within the manor, whether they be tenants of his lordship or not. In cases where the suitors appeared by proxy, when their names are called over in court, a charge of 2d. per head is exacted as an acknowledgment, and one of the bailiffs of the court receives the same in a leathern purse attached to the end of a rod ten or twelve feet in length. The roll of suitors having been called twice, and the names of defaulters carefully noted in a book, a new jury for the ensuing twelve months is empanelled and sworn. The oath administered is very similar to that taken by the grand jury at assizes.<sup>(5)</sup>

The Steward, or his deputy, then addresses the jury. The following address, delivered by Mr. Roscoe, deputy-steward, at the Court Leet in 1856, has been preserved, and as it fully represents the kind of presentments made in court, it has been thought advisable to insert it in full, along with the opening ceremony, in order to perpetuate the true character of this Court in modern times :—

#### MANOR OF ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE.

##### COURT LEET AND VIEW OF FRANK-PLEDGE.

The Court Leet and View of Frank-Pledge for the Manor of Ashton-under-Lyne, was held on Wednesday, November 5th, with more than ordinary ceremony. About half-past ten o'clock a procession of the jury, bye-law men, and other officers of the court, headed by the mace-bearer and javelin men,

(5.) Report on the Sanatory Condition of Ashton-under-Lyne, by John Ross Coulthart, Esq. p. 9.

in all 56 persons, entered the Old Town Hall, Old Cross, when the proceedings of the court were opened by the crier, in the following manner :—

Oyez ! Oyez ! Oyez !

All manner of persons who owe suit and service, or were summoned to appear at the Court Leet of the Right Honourable the Earl of Stamford and Warrington, here this day for the Manor of Ashton-under-Lyne, let them draw near and give their attendance, and every one answer as he shall be called.

#### THE CHARGE.

Gentlemen of the Jury.—As justice and peace are the great foundations of human happiness, so the advancement and preservation of them is, or ought to be, the end and design, not only of meeting together at this time, but of all Government, laws, and Courts of Judicature whatsoever. Gentlemen, all administration of justice was originally in the King's hands, but afterwards for the greater ease and benefit of his subjects, these courts wherein we are now met were ordained, and they are of very great antiquity, being in use long before the Norman Conquest, and were instituted for many good and wholesome ends and purposes, and certainly, gentlemen, if duly considered, it is a very great advantage and benefit to you that you may have such an easy and speedy redress of all offences and nuisances within your precincts, and justice done you even at your own doors, where matters must undoubtedly be best known and most easily remedied, and this would quickly be found to be true if the courts should be taken away. Gentlemen of the jury, I shall proceed to matters of your charge. *Defaulters*.—You shall inquire if all persons that owe suit and service to this court have appeared and done the same, and present the defaulters to the end that they may be amerced. *Rents*.—You shall inquire if any rents, duty, custom and service due to the Lord of this Manor be detained, concealed, or withdrawn, and present the same, and the persons by whom and out of what lands issuing. *Mills*.—If any withdraw their suit from the lord's mill by not grinding their corn there, as they ought to do, you shall present them. *Encroachments*.—If any of the lord's lands be withdrawn or concealed from him, or occupied without licence, or if any encroachments may be made on the lord's soil, you are to present the same. *Escheat*.—If any lands be fallen to the lord by way of escheat, as by the death of tenants without heir, or by the tenants being attainted or outlawed of felony, you are to inquire and present the same. *Heriots*.—If any tenant of the manor be dead since the last court, whose death is not yet presented, as you believe you are to present the same, and also what advantage accrued to the lord thereby as heriots or otherwise, and whether the same have been duly rendered him. *Tenants Selling without Licence*.—If any tenant has mortgaged or sold his tenement without giving notice to the lord and having his consent, it is here inquirable so that the lord may have cognisance who is his tenant and from whom to have his rents and services.

*Fishing, &c.*—If any persons who have fished, fowled, hawked, coursed, or hunted within the lord's demesnes, or elsewhere within this Manor, without the lord's license, you shall present the same. *Waste.*—Also, you shall inquire if any tenants, within this Manor, have committed any waste in pulling down any house or buildings, or suffering the same to decay, in cutting down any timber, trees, or the like, and present them. *Repairing Buildings.*—You shall inquire if all the tenants and farmers within this Manor do sufficiently uphold their buildings and tenements, for every tenant is obliged to do three things: 1st, That he be a true tenant to his lord; 2nd, That he sufficiently repair his buildings; and 3rd, That he pay and do all his suits, customs, and services at the day assigned. *Ways.*—You shall inquire if the highways and by-ways within the precincts of this leet be kept in good and sufficient repair, and present all defaulters therein. *Hedges, &c.*—You shall inquire if all the hedges and ditches next adjoining to the highways be sufficiently scoured and repaired, and present all defaulters therein. *Rubbish in the Streets.*—If any persons lay any wood, muck, carrion, or the like in the streets or highway, whereby the passage is straitened, or persons otherwise annoyed by the filth and stench of it, this is a common nuisance and here inquirable; and if any soil be cast into the streets or highway and suffered to remain there, the offender forfeits 12d. for every load, and you ought present it. *Roads Diverted.*—You shall also inquire if any ancient common way be stopped or diverted, or any ancient causeways be broken or decayed, and who ought to repair them, and present the defaulters. *Victuals.*—If any butchers, fishermen, or others sell any corrupt meat or victuals not wholesome to men's bodies, it is a common nuisance and here inquirable. If any brewers, bakers, butchers or the like tradesmen, shall conspire or make any covenant or promise together not to sell their victuals at such certain prices, this is here inquirable and presentable. *Weights.*—You shall also inquire if any persons have used any false weights and measures, or double measures and weights, a greater to buy by, and a lesser to sell by, in deceit of the King's people, and present the same. *Meers.*—If any persons have removed any ancient meers, bounds or marks set for the distinguishing of one man's land from another, you are to present them. *Pound.*—If any distress only impounded have been taken thence without due course of the law, this is a pound-breach, and here inquirable. *Rescons.*—If any of the lord's officers, or other officers, have duly seized or distrained any goods, and the same have been resconded from them, you are to present the same and the person by whom the rescons was made. *Officers.*—You shall also inquire if all constables, bailiffs, overseers of the poor, surveyors of the highways, and other officers within your limits, have well and duly executed their several offices, and present the defaulters. *Former Presentments.*—You shall also inquire if all defaulters here formerly presented and pains set, whether they have been sufficiently amended within the time



limited, and if all by-laws and orders heretofore made by this court have been duly kept and observed, and present all defaulters therein. And if there be any other matter or thing which either by the laws of the land or the particular use of this place is here inquirable, and by me omitted to be given to you in charge, you are also to present the same.<sup>(6)</sup>

After the business is finished the court is adjourned by the Crier, when it is customary for the gentlemen of the town and neighbourhood to be entertained at dinner by the Lord of the Manor, who is generally represented by his steward. It is needless to state that the dinner is the most popular part of the proceedings, and is generally very refreshing after the exacting duties of the day.

During the progress of the country it has been found necessary at different times to introduce various changes into the methods of local government, but while many other ancient manors have lost their ancient customs, they have been preserved to a very great extent in Ashton-under-Lyne, and "when the County Courts Act," was passed, "it was found necessary to make special legislative arrangements to meet the case of the lord of this manor."<sup>(7)</sup> On this account the feudal court leet "has not indeed been deprived of any of its ancient privileges, but has been superseded by more modern courts of concurrent and wider jurisdiction, while the ancient institution has remained as a

(6.) *The Ashton-under-Lyne Reporter*.

(7.) Referring to the utility of the Court, John Ross Coulthart, Esq., says:—"The prescriptive manorial powers exercised within the manor of Ashton-under-Lyne are not found to be in any respect oppressive; but, on the other hand, are found to be invaluable adjuncts to the effective working of our various local Acts of Parliament. Indeed I know of my own knowledge that the Commissioners appointed under our Police, Gas, Market, and Water Acts frequently derive much valuable assistance from the presentments of the Court-leet jury; and that if it were not for such excellent auxiliaries, several of the provisions of these Acts would be altogether inoperative. In all these local Acts of Parliament a provision is introduced, reserving unimpaired the privileges of the manor to Lord Stamford, and the clause is generally expressed in these words:—"Provided always, and be it further enacted, That nothing in this Act contained shall extend, or be construed or deemed or taken to extend, in any way to affect, extinguish, defeat, lessen, abridge, impeach, annul, prejudice, or destroy any rights, privileges, jurisdictions, immunities, rents, tolls, stallage, or lawful customs belonging, due, or in anywise appertaining to the lord of the manor of Ashton-under-Lyne; but all and every such rights, privileges, jurisdictions, immunities, rents, tolls, stallage, and lawful customs may be exercised, demanded, exacted, received, and enjoyed in as full and ample a manner, to all intents and purposes, as if this Act had not been passed."—Report on the Sanatory Condition of Ashton-under-Lyne, p. 13, Note.

peculiarity of the estate,'<sup>(8)</sup> and the authority of the court is still unimpaired in the hamlets and divisions outside the borough.<sup>(9)</sup>

Before the town received the Charter of Incorporation the Mayor of the Manor was a very important personage, but since that time the honours of the town have been very unequally divided between the Mayor of the Manor and the Mayor of the Borough, the latter being the more influential and popular position. Subjoined is a complete list of the Manorial Mayors from 1832 to the present time :—

1833-34-35—John Wood, Esq.; 1835-36—Nathaniel Howard, Esq.; 1836-37—James Jowett, Esq., J.P.; 1837-38—Samuel Earnshaw, Esq.; 1838-39—Joseph Oldham, Esq.; 1839-40—Samuel Heginbottom, Esq., J.P.; 1840-41—Samuel Swire, Esq.; 1841-42—Nicholas Earle, Esq.; 1842-43—Edwin Mellor,

- (8.) Soon after the holding of each half-yearly Court, notices are issued by the steward to all persons presented by the jury, and which notices contain all necessary extracts from the verdict. An estreat is likewise made out very soon after the holding of each Court, which contains the names and respective amerciaments of all defaulters, be they who they may, who failed to appear at the Court-leet when their names were called, and also the names and escheats of those persons who had neglected or refused to comply with the directions or verdicts of former jurymen in regard to soughing, fencing off, building necessities, repairing roads, &c. It is important to notice that this document, which is called an estreat, is written on a large skin of parchment, and is neither more nor less than an ancient manorial distress warrant. The following is the heading of this important instrument, which is invariably signed by the leet-steward, under seal, and is always put into the hands of two or more manorial bailiffs for execution :—

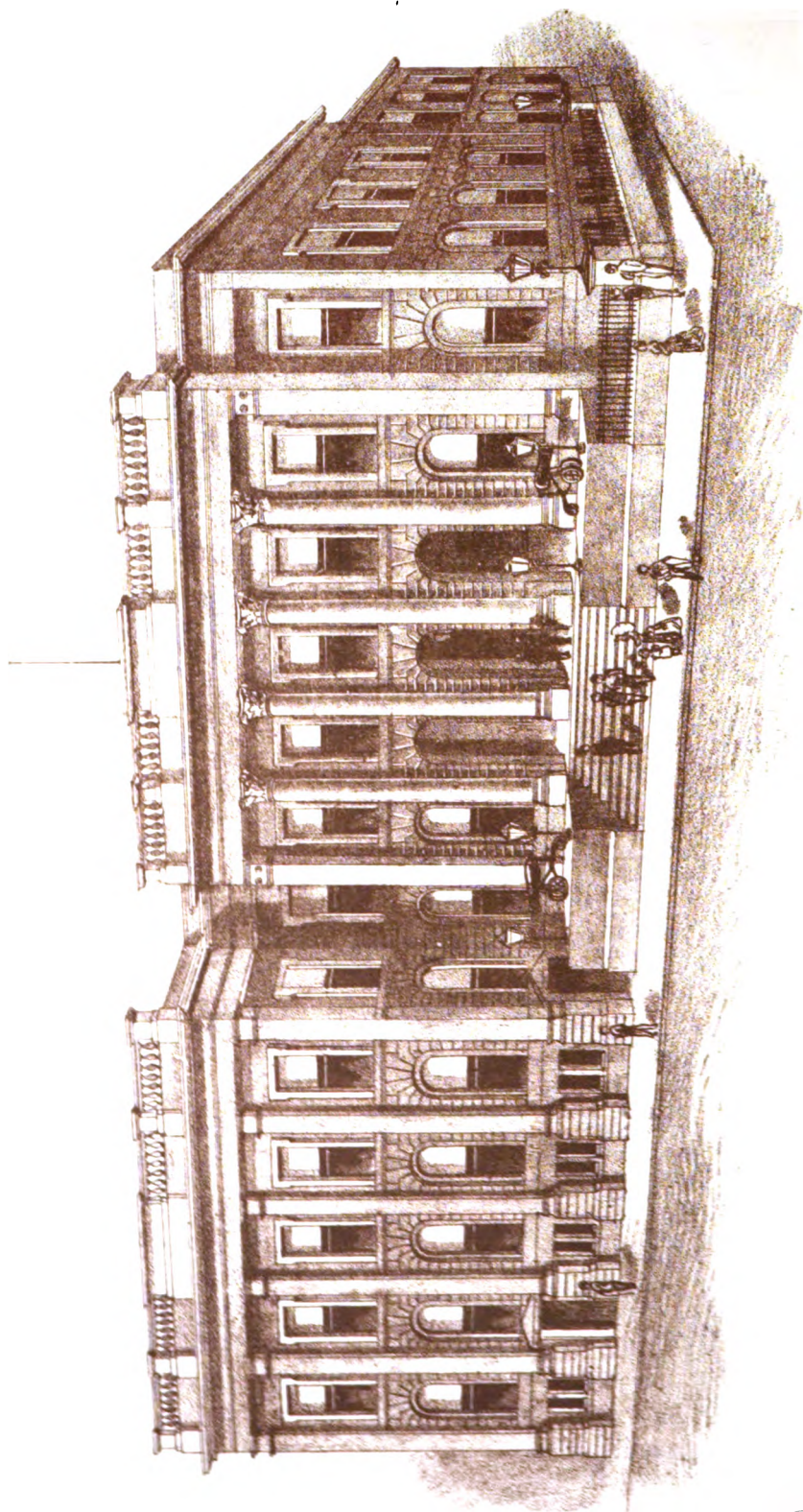
"The manor of Ashton-under-Lyne, } "An estreat of the several amerciaments or sums in the county of Lancaster, to wit. } of money set and imposed on the several persons hereunder named for the particular defaults and offences hereunder mentioned at the Court-leet and view of frank-pledge of the Right Honourable George Harry, Earl of Stamford and Warrington, holden for the manor of Ashton-under-Lyne, at the Court-house in Ashton-under-Lyne, within the said manor, on Wednesday, the eighth day of November, in the seventh year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Victoria, Queen over Great Britain, and so forth, before Legh Richmond, gentleman, steward of the said Court."

[Then follows a list of persons who have been amerced in the sum of 1s. for non-performing suit and service when their names were called in Court; and attached to that are the names of all persons who have neglected to comply with the order of the Court in respect of the removal of nuisances, &c., and who are for that reason amerced in the sum of 1*l.* 1*9s.* 11*d.* each. At the bottom of the skin of parchment, and immediately under the names and sums, are these words :—]

"The manor of Ashton-under-Lyne, } "Legh Richmond, gentleman, steward of the in the county of Lancaster, to wit. } Court aforesaid, to A— B— bailiff of the said Court, and also to C— D—, my bailiff for this time only, jointly and severally, GREETING. I COMMAND that you, some or one of you, do levy and raise on the goods and chattels of the several persons above mentioned, the several sums of money on them respectively imposed; and that you have the same monies at the next Court-leet to be holden for the said manor; and likewise this estreat. Dated at Ashton-under-Lyne aforesaid, within the said manor, the eighth day of November, in the seventh year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Victoria, Queen over Great Britain, and so forth, and in the year one thousand eight hundred and forty-three. LEGH RICHMOND, Steward." L.S.

A manorial distress warrant of the above description is issued every six months, and the bailiffs collect the sums specified in it without the slightest difficulty.—Report on the Sanatory Condition of Ashton-under-Lyne, pp. 11—12, Note.

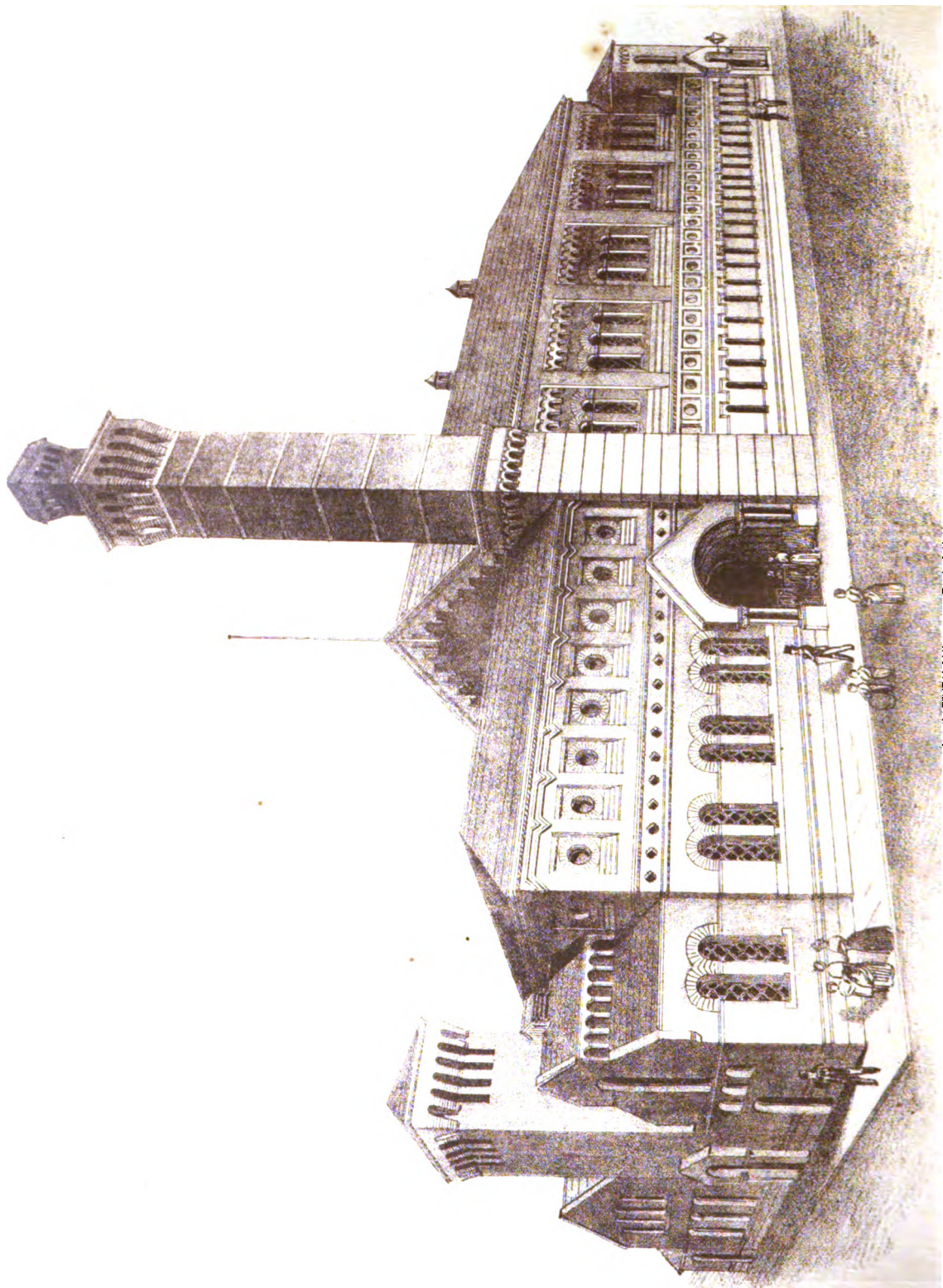
- (9.) *Ibid.*



ASHTON TOWN HALL.





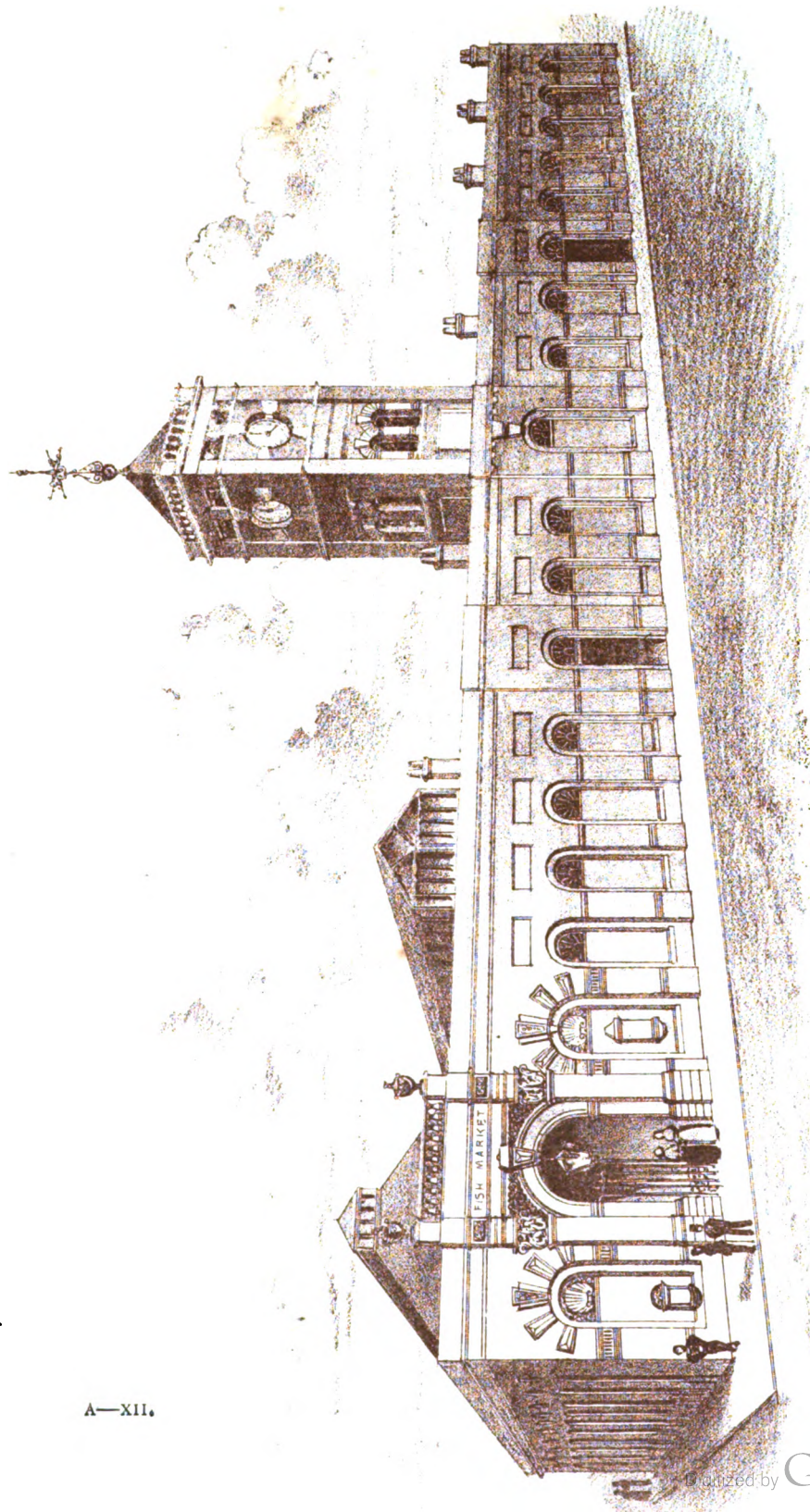


THE ASHTON PUBLIC BATHS.





A—XII.



ASHTON MARKET PLACE.



Esq. ; 1843-1844—Thomas Travis, Esq. ; 1844-45—James Kenworthy, Esq. ; 1845-46—John Mellor, Esq. ; 1846-47—Jonathan Andrew, Esq., J.P. ; 1847-48—Joseph Fletcher, Esq., J.P. ; 1848-49—George Mellor, Esq., J.P. ; 1849-50—Oldham Whittaker, Esq. ; 1850-51—Ralph Kershaw, Esq. ; 1851-52—John Chadwick, Esq., J.P., D.L. ; 1852-53—Henry Lees, Esq., J.P. ; 1853-54—John Bentley Carr, Esq. ; 1854-55—Benjamin Mellor Kenworthy, Esq., J.P. ; 1855-56-57—John Ross Coulthart, Esq., J.P. ; 1857-58—Thomas Mason, Esq. ; 1858-59—Abel Harrison, Esq. ; 1859-60—Nathaniel Howard, Esq. ; 1860-61—Thomas Walton Mellor, Esq., J.P. ; 1861-62—William Heginbottom, Esq., J.P. ; 1862-63-64-65—Samuel Duncuft Lees, Esq., J.P. ; 1865-66—John Mellor Kershaw, Esq., J.P. ; 1866-67—John Mayall, Esq., J.P. ; 1867-68-69—George Andrew, Esq., J.P. ;—1869-70—William Buckley, Esq. ; 1870-71—Alexander Butler Rowley, Esq., J.P., D.L. ; 1871-72-73—John Fletcher, Esq., J.P. ; 1873-74-75—Thomas Harrison, Esq., J.P. ; 1875-76-77—Ely Andrew, Esq., J.P. ; 1877-78-79—Ralph Bates, Esq., J.P. ; 1879-80-81—Joseph Edward Judson, Esq. ; 1881-82-83—John Mayall, Esq. ; 1883-84-85—James Beardoe Grundy, Esq. ; 1885-86-87—Frank Andrew, Esq.



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## APPENDIX.

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### *The Custom Roll and Rental*

OF THE

### *Manor of Assheton-under-Lyne,*

ENTITLED

### *"A COPY OF AN OLD MANUSCRIPT,"*

*" possessione Jonæ Harrop de Barsley,"*

*" Anno 1749."*

*" Nunc possessione Ralf Assheton, Bar. de Middleton."\**

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This manuscript was first published by James Butterworth in his History of Ashton-under-Lyne.

*Covenants made between Sir John de Assheton and his tenants.*—This is the covenant made between John of Assheton, Knight, and Tenants of the town of Assheton, of their swine, the year of the reign of King Richard the Second after the Conquest, the third, that the aforesaid Tenants shall have their swine going in the demesnes of the aforesaid town. Fro the latter end of harvest unto sowing time (out taken the little Parke and Hallyards) so that the aforesaid swine be ringed fro the foresaid latter end of the harvest unto the foresaid time of sowing. And the foresaid tenants shall keep them, that they do no

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\* I have preferred arranging the following Custom Roll, &c., according to the order of their dates, as I conceive that was the form in which the original documents were placed. The orthography of this ancient manuscript, it is to be regretted, has not been faithfully preserved.—Butterworth.

harm to the Lord, nor to their neighbours, in the time out taken, that is to say, fro seeding time to harvest be in, and this covenant to be fulfilled, the aforesaid Tenants will then, when so any swine be taken in any default aforesaid, that he that own swine shall loose to the Lord 4d., and each Tenant of them aforesaid shall have as many swine as it is written underneath, That is to witt, every tenant of Tenants aforesaid of the said Town, that brews to sell, and the milner, shall hold three swine; and every tenant of the Tenants aforesaid, that hold land in the fields, shall hold two swine; and every tenant of the Tenants aforesaid, that holds no land, shall have one swine.

The Free Tenants-at-will of the Lordshippe of Assheton, the year of the reign of King Henry the Fourth, after the Conquest the first, grantyn to John of Assheton, Knight, in his plain Hall Court, the Tuesday next before the Ascension of our Lord, that if any Free Tenant or Tenants that owe multer the Milne, sell their corne growing upon their tenements, and buy corne of other, and with the same corne bought corne to the milne and multer not, but to the love sucken of that corne bought, and of this they have been convicted in the Lord's Court by Inquest, they shall pay to the Lord xxs., the which shall be raised by their goods by the Lord's Bailey.

*The Rent-roll of John de Assheton. Tempus, First of Henry the Sixth. A.D. 1422.*—"At the feast of Martyn in winter, the year of the King Henry (the sixth after the conquest) the first. All the tenants of the Lordship of Assheton-under-Lyne, taking their Tenements to ffarm for twenty winter term, at John of Assheton, Knight, the which came out of Normandy. At the same feast, with all the services, customs, and usages, as after is, in this Book written and rehearsed, and as it has been used and customed of old time, and every man to pay his ffarm at two tymes in the year, as the Rental of this said Book makes mention. The service of the said Tenants is this, that they shall give their presents at Yole (*Christmas*) every present to such a value, as it is written and sett in the Rental, and the Lord shall feed all his said Tenants and their wives, upon Yole day at the dinner, if them like for to come, but the said Tenants and their wives, though it be for their ease not for to come, they shall send neither man nor woman in their name, but if he their son, other their daughter dwelling with them unto the dinner, for the Lord is not bounden to feed all, save only the good man and the good wife. Also every Tenant that plough has, shall plow two days, and he that half plough has, shall plow a day, whether the Lord beleiver in wheat seeding, other in Lenten seeding; and every Tenant harrow a day with their harrow in seeding time, when they bin charged, and they shall cart, every Tenant ten cart full of turve, fro Done a Moss, to Ashton; and shear four days in harvest and cart a day corne, and they shall pay a principal at their death, that is to wit: the best beast they have, which other deed, next after Holy Kirk. Also the said Tenants shall multer their corne growing upon their said Tenements at the Lord's milne to the sixteenth vessel, and they shall go to none other milne to make their corne growing on their Tenements, but to the Lord's milne, and if they buy corne the which is dryed with the Lord's *ffewel*, they shall multer at the Lord's milne to the sixteenth vessel, and all other corne that they buy, they shall multer to the love sucken, which is to the twenty fourth vessel, and go to none other milne, if the corne be brought within the said lordship.

This is the whole Rental of the Tenants-at-will of the said Lordship of Assheton, and the value of their presents at Yole, the year and day aforesaid, the which Rent shall be payd at two terms of the year, that is for to wit: the ton half at the feast of St. John Baptist, tother half at the feast of St. Martyn, 'ith' winter.

*Rentale Tenent ad voluntatem de doma de Assheton, Anno Regni Regis Henri Sexti primo.*

Magot, that was the wife of Richard of Hadfield, has taken that place which her husband held, to the Dome terme, with the services, customs, and usages that longes to the Tenants of the said lordship of Assheton, yeldeing yearly for the said place at the said feast at Midsummer and Martinmas, 39s. and 6d., and at Yole, a present to the value of 20d.—John of Hollinworth has taken the place that he held with the said service, customs, and usages, yeldeing yearly therefore at the feasts aforesaid, 38s. and 2d., and at the Yole, a present to the value of 16d.—Christopher de Vernon, has taken certain land within Shepley and in Doneam Moss, with the service of 4 day shearing, paying yearly 15s. and 4d.—William the Walker, has taken the tenements that he ere held, and the moor hey in the Rycroft, with the services, customs, and usages aforesaid, yeldeing yearly at the feasts aforesaid, 22s. and 10d., and at the Yole a present to the value of 8d.—Robert the Walker, has taken the tenement that he ere held with the services, customs, and usages aforesaid, yeldeing yearly at the feasts aforesaid, 22s. and 10d., and for the Walk Milne, 26s. and 8d., and at Yole, a present to the value of 12d.—John of the Edge, has taken the land lying to the milne, with the services and customs aforesaid, yeldeing yearly at the feasts aforesaid, 13s. and 4d., and a present at Yole to the value of—  
—Roger Unton has taken the place that Jack Coke held, except the land that lyes beyond the ffold that Richard Unton holds, yeldeing yearly a whole service and 10s., and a present.—Roger le Smith, for a meadow in the over Rycroft field, 3s. and 4d.—Syssot, that was the wife of Patrick, for a house and a garden at the milne, she shall shear 4 days in harvest, and shall give a principal at her dying, and for her term shall pay 2s., and a present at Yole to the value of 4d.—Malkyn, that was the wife of Diccon Hoggeson, for her Tenement at the Milne, 20s.—Mergot of Stealey, for Kilne, 5s.—Robert of Chadwick, for his Tenement, he shall do the service as other cottages done, and pay 5s. and a present to the value of 4d.—Alys, that was Pole wife, the same service for a cottage, and shall pay 12d., and a present to the value of 4d.—Margot of Stanley, the same service, and 2s., and a present to the value 4d.—Syssot, that was the wife of Dycon Wilson, the same service, and 2s., and a present to the value 4d.—Alys Hanson, the same service, and 2s., and a present to the value 4d.—Nan of Windebank, the same service, and 2s., and a present to the value 4d.—Thomas of White leigh, the same service, and 5s., and present to the value 4d.—John Ffulstaffe, for his cottage, a service and 4s. For Lusley 2d.—The same John, for lands in Colwel, 12s.—Elyn Wilkyn Daughter, for her cottage, a service, and 2s.—Roby Ffulstaffe, a whole service, the present 14d. and 32s. 6d., for Lusley 2d.—The wife of Peryn, for her cottage, a service, 2s.—Elyn, of Hulme, for her cottage, a service, and 2s.—William of Buckley, for a cottage, a service and 2s.—Nanne, that was the wife of Robyn Jackson, for a cottage, the service, and 2s.—Jone, that was the wife of Atkyn Tumson, for a cottage, a service, and 2s.—William Somaster, for a cottage, a service, and 2s.—William, Richard's son, of Bardsley, for a cottage, a service, and 2s.—John of Haworth, for a cottage, a service, and 2s.—Roger the Smith, for a cottage, a service and 20s. and 5d.—Syssot, that was the wife of Thomas the Cook, a service and 6s. and 8d.—Robert Unton, for his tenement, a whole service, the present 10d. and 7s., and 6d. for Lusley.—Jenkyn Cocker, for his tenement, a croft at the Town end, that Richard, of Oldome held, 20s.—Hobbe Adamson, for his tenement, a whole service, and 11s. and 6d., the present 12d.—Roger the Baxter, for a cottage, a service, and 8s. and 2d.—The same Roger, for lands in Wollowe, 25s.—The same Roger, for Bake House, 6s. and 8d.—Robyn Somaster, for his cottage and the Vyner Stedes, a service, and 2s.—Adam of the Holde, for a cottage, a service and 4s.—William the Arrow-smith, for a cottage, a service and 4s.—Margot, that was the wife of John the Hind, for a cottage, a service and 2s.—Roger the Smith, for a Smithy, 2s.—John Spakeman, for a cottage, a service and 2s.—Jak the Spencer, Bailey shall, for all the profits, of the Tolls, the Fairs, and the Market.—Elyn the Rose, for a cottage, a service and 2s.—Jenkyn of the wood, for his tenement, a whole service, and the present at 12d. and the Farm at 20s. and 6d.—The same Jkn. for his holding in the Basket fields, 13s. 4d.—Richard Unton, for his tenement, and the Rhodes ffields in the Thenes ker, and for lands that was Jak the Cooks by the Pool, 26s. and 8d.—William of Bardsley, for his tenement, a whole service, the present 10d. and the farm

28s. 10d.—John of Hogh, for his tenement, the service of 4 days shearing and a principal, the Farm 14s.—William of the Woodfield, for his cottage, a service, the present 6d.—His farm, Hanlawe, 16s. 4d., for Lusley 4d.—Thomas Robynson, for his tenement, a whole service, the present 18d., the Farm 36s. and 2d., for Lusley 7d.—Roufe Bardesley, a whole service, the present 15d., the Farm 34s. and 6d., for Lusley 6d.—William the Cocker, for his tenement, a whole service, the present 14d., the farm 27s. and 8d., for L 8d.—Richard de Bardsley, of Hurst, for the over end of the Old Thene's ker, the which the Lord marled, 10s.—Jak Johnson, for his tenement, a whole service, the present 10d., the farm 29s. 6d., for L 16d.—William of Bardsley, of Hazlehurst, a whole service, the service 20d., the farm 2s. and 6d., for L 7d.—William of the Woodfield, for a Lond at Erley, 4s.—John of Hleghrode, for an Intake in the Bastall, 2s.—The same John, for William field, 10s.—Thomlyn of the Leghes, of Hazlehurst, for his tenement, a whole service, the present 15d., the farm 32s. and 2d., for L 4d.—Richard the Smith, for his tenement, a whole service, the present 15d., the farm 34s. 8d., for L 4d.—Richard of Bardsley, of Hurst, for the Old Thenes Carr, 30s.—Hugh of Gaytcliffe, for his tenement, a whole service, the present 6d., the farm 8s. and 6d., for L 4d.—Jack the Mercer, for his tenement, a whole service, the present 9d., the farm 8s. and 6d., for L 6d.—Jack the Spencer, for his tenement, a whole service, the present 9d., the farm 17s. 6d., for L 2d.—The same, for Hobryding 6s. and 8d.—John of Lyngards, a whole service, the present 9d., the farm 17s. 6d., for L 8d.—Thomas Sanderson, for his tenement, a whole service, the present 8d., the farm 25s. and 6d., for L 7d.—Robyn Sanderson, for his tenement, a whole service, the present 12d., the farm 33s. and 6d., for L 4d.—Jak le Mercer, for Wollowe 10s.—Robyn Robynson, for his tenement, a whole service, the present 10d., the farm 29s. and 2d.—Thomlyn Diconson, for his tenement, a whole service, the present 6d., the farm 7s. 6d., for L 4d.—Nichol Saunderson for his tenement, a whole service, the present 6d., the Farm 16s. and 2s., for L 2d.—John Saunderson for his tenement, a whole service, the present 7d., the Farm 11s. and 6s., for L 6d.—Jak the Hind for his tenement, a whole service, the present 8d., the Farm 19s. 6d., for L 6d.—Wilkyn Robynson for his tenement, a whole service, the present 13d., the Farm 29s. and 6d., for L 10d.—Jak of the Leghes for two parts of Mossley, a whole service, the present 20d., the Farm 39s. and 6d., for L 6d.—The same Jak for Knolls Meadow and the Haycroft, 5s.—The same Jak for certain Land in the Moor Hey, 6s. and 8d.—Adam Wilson for his tenement, four days and principal, the Farm 20s. and 4d.—The wife of Wilkyn Atkynson, and John her son, for her tenement, a whole service, the present 12d., the Farm 28s. and 8d., for L 9d.—John the Slater for his tenement, a whole service, the present 8d., the Farm 16s. and 6d., for L 8d.—James of Meltham for his tenement, a whole service, the present 15d., the Farm 36s. and 6d., for L 11d.—Richard Lyngards for his tenement, a whole service, the present 9d., the Farm 21s. and 6d., for L 10d.—Dycon Wilkinson for his tenement, a whole service, the present 8d., the Farm 14s. 6d., for L 10d.—William Slatter for his tenement, a whole service, the present 6d., the Farm 10s. and 6d., for L 2d.—Rauf Johnson for his tenement, a whole service, the present 8d., the Farm 16s. 6d., for L 6d.—Roger the Cropper for his tenement, a whole service, the present 9d., the Farm 22s. and 6d., for L 8d.—William the Walker for his tenement, a whole service, the present 8d., the Farm 15s. and 2d., for L 4d.—Thomas Meltham for his tenement, a whole service, the present 15d., the Farm 38s. and 8d., for L 2d.—Rauf of Curtal for his tenement, a whole service, the present 14d., the Farm 41s. and 10d., for L 10d.—Robert the Wright for his tenement, a whole service, the present 20d., the Farm 56s. and 11d., for L 10d.—Dycon Robynson for his tenement, a whole service, the present 8d., the Farm 22s., for L 6d.—Adam of Bardsley for his tenement, a whole service, the present 9d., the Farm 19s. and 6d., for L 5d.—Richard of Bardsley for Holden, 16d.—Robin the Cropper for his tenement, a whole service, the present 15d., the Farm 36s.—John Busdytan for his tenement, a whole service, the present 10d., the Farm 23s. and 6d.—Thurston of Bardsley for his tenement, a whole service, the present 7d., the Farm 15s. 6d.—Robert le Wright for Wollowe, 13s. and 4d.—George of Bardsley for his tenement, a whole service, the present 10d., the Farm 26s. and 5d.—Christophore of Bardsley for the More that he holds, 2s. and 6d.—William of the Cross for his tenement, with two Doles of the Dede Carr, a whole service, the present 7d., the Farm 13s. and 10d.—William of Cowleshagh for his tenement, a whole service, the present 6d., the Farm 9s. 6d.—Thomas of Claydon, for lands that he holds within Taunton, 3s.—John the Byron, Knight, for Whitworth Lands in Droylsden, during the lives of Richard Upton and Alys his wife, the rent yearly, 20d.—Thomas Cartnal, for barn in the town of Ashton, 2s. 6d.—John of the Edge, for both corn milnes, to pay at St. Holyn Day and Myghelmas, and the Lord to hold the milnes at his costs as it has been custumed, the farm at the days aforesaid, 16s. and 4d.—Thomas of the Leghes, and Sysstot that was the wife of Dycon of Hollinworth, for the tone half of the intake in Pallden Wood, 13s. 4d.—The same Thomas of the Leghes, for an intake besyde Alt Hey, 10s.—

John of the Winterbotham for the marled earth next Rhodes field, for ten years terme, the farm 26s. and 8d.—John of Ainsworth for Rydde Legh, 9s. and 6d.—Richard of Lyngards for the land that Thomlyn the Cropper marled in Alt Hey for this 20 year, the farm 19s. and 8d.—Syssot, that was the wife of Jak of Birdsley, for a cottage in the Parke, a service, the farm 2s.—A plase of land in Wordel in Rachedale, the farm 20s.—Christopher of Belfield, for land in Clegge in Rachedale, 15s.—The which land was afterwards changed for the Coppy, and Hurst, in Oldome Pareshe.—The place that was Runlyns of Assheton, 13s. and 4d.—John of Assheton, 22s.—Thomas of Cloghed, for the Soureker, 4s. and 4d.—William of Lawton, 5s.—The third part of Mossley, 20s.—The turvery of Ashton Moss, by estimation, yearly, 5 pound, and John Buron, for parcel of the Moss, 16s.—For the Heath Barn and the Croft, 4s.

*The Gyst Ale of the Town of Assheton.*—Margret that was the wife of Hobbe the Kyng, for her fine, 3s. 4d.—Hobbe Adamson for his fine, 3s. 4d.—Roger the Baxter for his fine, 3s. 4d.—Robert Somayster for his fine, 3s. 4d.—Jenkyne of the Wode for his fine, 3s. 4d.—Thomas of Curtнал for his fine, 3s. 4d.—The Tolls of the Fairs and the Market, by estimation, 2 marke. The Court and the fines by estimation, 40s.—The serviz of all the tenants by estimation.

*The Londes and the Tenements, the which is had within the Lordship of Ashton for the term of Life.*—Rauf of Assheton, and Robyn of Assheton, have Sour Car, Gulde Rode, and Stame Rynges, for the terme of their lives; Rauf, of the gift of John of Assheton, Knyghte, the Elder; and Robyn, of the gifte of John of Assheton, Knighte, the younger, the farm. The same Rauf and Robyn have a place in the Town of Assheton, and the Garden thereto belonging, for terme of their lives, the Farm.—John the Cook has a tenement in the Town of Assheton, for the term of life, the farm.—John of the Wood has a parcel of the Basket Ffield, for the terme of life, the farm.—Richard Unton has a House and Croft in Assheton, the terme.—The third part of Mossley.

*The Free Tenants that maken fine yearly, for making of the Milne were &c.*—The place of Shepley pays every year, 16d.—The place of Richard of Moston in Audenshagh, 16d.—The place of Nichol of Hurst, 16d.—The extent of the Demesnes of Assheton and the Park yearly over the rep'se.

*Rental Liber Tenant de Dome. de Assheton Sub Lima, anno supra do da solvend ad six Terminis annl, &c.*—Roulin of the Wood, and his, for their Land in Audenshaw, the which were William of Aldwinshagh's, 3s. 6d.—The Heir of Richard of Moston, for his lands in Alwinshagh, 3s. 6d.—Richard the Hurst, of Welkyn Tyrr, for an intake, 3d.—Richard the Hunt, for the half of Beckingham fields, 4s.—The Heir of Piers of Shepley, for Shepley, 3s. 7d.—Robert of the Rasbotham, for Rasbotham, 5d.—John of Heyrode, for his tenement, 7s. 1d.—The Heir of Thomas of Staveley, for the Bastal and Hurst, 2s. 1d.—The same Heir, for the Three Houses, 6s.—The same Heir of Staveley, and the Heir of Thomas of Trafford, and others, for Assheton Londs and Palden Wood, 4s.—Thomas of the Leghs, John of the Knolles, Richard of Hollingworth, John of the Aspenhalgh, for their tenements in the Leghes, 6d.—The Heir of Adam of Leghes, for his tenement in Leghes, 10d.—The same Heir of Adam of Leghes, for an intake in Palden Wood, 3s. 4d.—The same Thomas of the Leghes, for an intake in Paulden Wood, 3s. 4d.—John of the Knolles, for the Rhodes field, 6s. 10d.—The same John, for his part of an intake in Palden Wood, 4s. 6d.—John of the Aspenhalgh and his wife, for their part of an intake in Palden Wood, 4s. 6d.—Adam of Tetlow, for the light Birches, 1s.—The Heir of Hobbe of the Leghes, for the Knolles, 2s.—Adam Wilson Dogeson, for the Blakenows, 1s. 7½d.—The Heir of William of Luzley, for William field, 1s.—Richard of Bardsley, for his tenement of Hurst, 5d.—Nichol of Hunt, for his tenement in Hurst, 5d.—Thomas of Claydon, for Taunton, 3s. 6d.—Richard of Bardsley, for Bardsley, the Ashes, and the Limehurst, 5s. 10d.—Piers of Worsley, for the Rugsho and Woodfield, 2s.—Richard the Byron, Knight for the Woodhouses, 1s.—The same Richard, for Lond in Sunderland, 6d.—The Heir of Thomas Hadfield, Knight for Sunderland, 2s.—Richard of Bardsley, a Rose.

Sum total ..... £4 13s. ob. 2d.

\*Sum tot redditus ..... 27 12s. 11½d.

"Obaque omnibus servitus and escenuis anglie Presands."

*Libi Tenentes de termino Annunciatoris Beatas Mariae Suprado, &c.*—Nichus del Hurst, pro tenemen suo in Hurst, 9d.—Richardus de Moston p ten suo in Aldwinshagh, 9d.—Petrus de

\* This sum is very far short of being correct, if the items are correctly copied.

Shepley de Shepley, p Shepley, 7doo.—William de Aldwinshagh, p ten suo in Aldwinshagh, 9d.—Ricus fil Johis de Bardsley, p ten suo in Hyrst, 1doo.—Robertus de Rosbotham le Rasbotham, 1doo.—Johis del Hegrode, p ten suo, 12d.—Thos de Claydon, p Taunton, 6d.—William de Lusley, pro William field, 3d.—Thomas de Staveley, p le Hyrst, 3d.—The same Thomas, p le 3 Houses, 3d.

*Libi tenent de Termo Pentecost.*—Petrus de Trafford, p Alston Londes and Palden Woode 10d.—Idem Petrus de terra in Sherewinde, 3d.—Heres Ada de Mossley, p Alston Londes and Palden, 5d.—Adm. Wilson Doggeson, p le Knolles, 6d.—Heres Roberti, le p Palden Wood, and Alston Londes, 6d.—Adam de Tetlaw, p Light Birches, 12d.—Thomas del Leghes, and socii sui p lez Leghes, 3d.—Adam del Leghes, lez Nether Leghes, 2d.

*Libi tenent de termo Seti Johis Bapt.*—Wills de Aldwinshagh, p ten suo in Aldwinshagh, 9d.—Ricus de Moston, p ten suo in Aldwinshagh, 9d.—Wills de Aldwinshagh p Aldwinshagh, 6d.—Petrus de Shepley p Shepley, 7dob.—Ricus de Hunt, p half Beckinton field, 4d.—Robtus de Rasbotham, p Rasbotham, 1doo.—Johes del Heyrode, p ten sui 21d.—Wills de Luzley, p William field, 3d.—Ricus Fil Johes de Bardsley, p ten suo in Hyrst, 1doo.—Nichus de Hyrst, p ten suo in Hyrst, 9d.—Ricus de Bardsley, p le Ashes, 2ss.—Idem Ricus, p Old Alt, 9d.—Idem Ricus, p Bardsley, 1d rosam.—Johes del Knolles, p Rhodes field, 3s. & 5d.—The same John for an intake in Palden Wood, 2s. & 3d.—Ricus de Hollingworth, for an intake in Palden Wood, 2s. & 3d.—Johes de Aspinhalgh, for an intake in Palden Wood, 2s. & 3d.—Thomas of Bardsley, for three Houses, 3d.—Ricus Bryon Miles, p le Woodhouses, 12d.—Idem Ricus p Sunderland, 6d.—Thomas de Claydon, p Taunton, 6d.

*Libi tenent de termino Seti Micht Archi.*—Wills de Aldwinshagh, p ten suo in Aldwinshagh, 9d.—Ricus de Moston, p ten suo in Aldwinshagh, 9d.—Petrius de Shepley, p Shepley, 7dob.—Johes de Rasbotham, p Rasbotham, 1doo.—Johes del Hegrode, p ten suo, 2s. & 11d.—Willis de Lusley, p William field, 3d.—Adm Wilson Doggeson, p le Knolles, 6doboo.—Adm de Leghes, for an intake in Palden legh, 3s. & 4d.—Thomas de Leghes, for an intake in Palden legh, 3s. & 4d.—Ricus Fil Johis de Bardsley, p ten suo in Hyrst, 1doo.—Nichus del Hyrst, p ten suo in Hyrst, 9d.—Thomas de Claydon, p Taunton, 2s.—Petrus de Worseley, p le Rugheghs and Woodfield, 2s.—Heres Thoms de Hatfield, milit p Sunderland, 2s.—Johes del Knolles, p redy Legh, 3s. & 5d.—Idem Johes, for an intake in Palden wood, 2s. & 4d.—Ricus de Hollinworth, for an intake in Palden, 2s. & 3d.—Johs del Aspinhalgh, for an intake in Palden, 2s. & 9d.

*Libi tenent de termino Sancti Martini.*—Ricus de Moston, p ten suo in Aldwinshagh, 6d.—Petrus de Shepley, p Shepley, 12d.—Thomas de Stanley, p three houses, 3d.—Petrus de Trafford, p terra in Sherewinde, 3d.—Idem Petrus, p Alston, Londs and Palden wood, 10d.—Heres dde de Mosley, p Alston, londs and Palden wood, 5d.—Heres Robti Dane, p Palden wood and Alston londs, 6d.—Thomas del Leghes, and secii sui p Lez Leghes, 3d.—Adm del Leghes, p le Nether Leghes, 6d.—Idem Adm, p le Leghes, 2d.—Heres Roberti del Leghes, p le Knolles, 2s.

*Libi tenent de Termo Natal Dmi.*—Willielmus de Aldwinshagh, p ten suo in Aldwinshagh, 9d.—Ricus de Moston, p ten suo in Aldwinshagh, 9d.—Ricus le Hunt and Wills Tyrre, for an intake 3d.—Petrus de Shepley, p Shepley, 8dob.—Robertus de Rosbotham, p le Rosbothom, 1doo.—Johannes del Hegrode, p ten suis, 18d.—Willielmus de Lusley, p Willm field, 3d.—Thomas de Staveley, p three houses, 3d.—Idem Thomas, p le Bastal, 1d.—Adam Wilson Doggeson, p le Knolles, 6d.—Rechardus Fillius Johannis de Bardsley, p ten suo in Hyrst, 1doo.—Nichus de Hyrst, p ten suo in Hyrst, 9d.—Thomas de Staveley, p ten le Hyrst, 9d.—Thos de Claydon, p Taunton, 6d.—Jakin of the Winterbotham, has tane the marled earth in the Rhodes field, 10 years terme, the terme beginning at the Martinmas, the year of King Henry the Sixth,—the second, paying therefore yearly at the terme aforesaid, two marks; and John of Aynsworth and Thomlyn of the Leghes of Halseworth, are his Borows, that he shall well and truly pay his fiarm during the said terme.

*This is the Rental to Thomas of Assheton, Son and Heir to Sir John Assheton, of the lands and tenements, the which the said John gave him at his marriage, within the Lordshyp of Assheton, and to his wife, as their Deed makes mention.*

Richard of Hadfield, for his tenement in Aldwinshagh, a service, the service 10s.—John of Hollinworth, for the Birchenshaw, a service, the fiarm of the Birchenshaw, 20s.—William of

Bardesley, the younger, for the old horse car, the ffarm, 20s.—Thomas of Jenkinson, of the Bardesley, for the old Thenes carr, the ffarm, 30s.—Thomas Saunderson, for his tenement in the ffarm, Xs.—Thomlyn Diconson, for his tenement, a service, the ffarm thereof, VIIIs.—Magot, that was the wife of Jenkyn, the cropper, for lands in Wollowe, the ffarm, IIIs.—Robert Saunderson, for the Childerscroft, in Wollowe, the ffarm, —Tomlyn, the tailor, for his tenement at the Waterhouses, in Harper Wollowe, a service, the ffarm, XXXs.—Gregory, of Bardesley, for his tenement at the Waterhouses, the ffarm, XXIIIs.—Thomas of the Leghes, Richard of the Hollinworth, for their lands in Palden Legh, XXIIIs. VIIId.

	£	s.	d.
This settlement as far as made out .....	9	2	7
To which add the sum total of Sir John's rent .....	27	12	11½

Besides services and presents makes ..... 36 15 6½

The tenants-at-will of the said Lordship of Assheton, have taken their holdings and their places XX Winter Terme, as it is afore rehearsed, and in this form, that if any tenant or tenants list not hold their nor their holdings, within their terme that they sit in, and they like to give up their places or their holdings at the Martinmas; the Lord shall receive them at the Martinmas next after: with this, that the said tenant or tenants leave their places, their houses, and their closes, able as they ought to be, and their land in the field as able and as good, a tenant for to take, as it was at their taking, in the beginning of their terme of years, and if they do not, it shall be overseen, and the houses and the closes, shall be overseen by four or six men sworne, the which shall be taken by the Lord and his officers. And they shall sett, by their consciences, what would repair the houses and the closes, and if the Lord belikes, he shall take that money that is sett, and repair the houses and the closes. And if the Lord like not so to do, the tenant that is to come shall take it, and if him like, and if he like not, the four or six men sworne shall take the money that they have sett, and repair the houses and the closes; able as they ought to be repaired. And this rule and custom shall be had when as ever any tenant removes, be it within the terme, or at the terme end. And as touching the Lond that lies to the place, these four or six men sworne shall sett, by their conscience, what they hold the land worse yearly a tenant for to take, than it was at taking of tenant that removes, and as many years as is behind of his terme, of so mickle shall the tenant that removes answer to the Lord if he removes fro his place within his terme, according to the sum sett by the sworne men. But it shall be well understanden, that if the tenant hold his land unto the terme, and remove unto another place at the terme end: the houses and the closes shall be seen in the form as is before said, but the land in the ffields shall not be seen or sett, as is before rehearsed: unless the tenant by fraud and upon purpose, crede his land of miss and unreasonably, or done to his holding other diverse harme upon malice and for evil will. Also, the tenants-at-will of the said Lordship, shall multer at the sixteenth vessel, and go to none other milne, but to the Lord's milnes, and which of them that is found guilty of going to any other milne, they shall be highly amerced, and make fine at the Lord's will; and the free tenants that oghen soken to the mill, shall multer as their chartours will, and as they have been accustomed of old time. And the free tenants, and the tenants-at-will, shall give the milner his service at all times, as it has been accustomed aforetime always, and if there be any default in the milner's service, that may be proved lawfully, he shall be punished highly by the Lord at his Courts, as the law and the customs will, and as has been used aforetime. And the customs of the milne shall be kept, every man to keep his grist as has been used aforetime, and when the Lord's corn come to the milne, he shall put all men out of their grist, and take their corn out of the hopper if any be therein. And his corn shall be ground next at all times before all men, when it comes to the milne, without multer or paying service to the milner, but at his lyst if he likes, and curtasy, to give to the said milner.

The free tenants of the Lordship of Assheton have granted to John of Assheton, Knight, for to be Infeoffed in the Hall mote of Assheton, after the customs and the burgales of the aforesaid town, to term of their lives out taken, that they will not swear upon the Inquest between the tenants-at-will at the suit of party, but they will swear between free tenants and tenants-at-will, that is to witt, six of the free tenants, and six of the tenants-at-will. And also, between the Lord and free tenants, and the tenants-at-will. And also, the aforesaid free tenants and the tenants, grants, for to hold the Ordinances and the Customs before-time made and used, and the which afterward are to be made by the grant of them, to the Lord's profit and the tenants aforesaid. And the foresaid free tenants, and the tenants-at-will of the Manor of Assheton, grants to John of Assheton, Knight, that if any of them be convicted by

B—XII.



Inquest of any trespass done to others in his beginning, and of his own wrong, that then the Lord of the Town, by his Bailey, shall distrain him by his goods by Great Distresse, unto the time that he have amended it reasonably to the party grieved. And also to the Lord for the trespass, at his will, and the trespasser have goods within the Lordship. And if that he have none, then the Lord of the Town, or his Bailey, shall take him with strength of the foresaid free tenants and tenants-at-will, and sett him in the stocks, unto the time that he have amended unto the party grieved, and to the Lord.

And also the grant the aforesaid free tenants and tenants-at-will, and all that dwell in the foresaid town, that if any man of any other town or towns, come within the foresaid town for to do any harm to any tenants resident within the town, that anon all the tenants and residents foresaid, within the foresaid town should rise, with their neighbours, to take and arrest the foresaid trespasser unto their power, after that they be warned by their neighbours, or by the Lord's Bailey, or by any man. Fro that time that there be knowing of such a misdoer And if any of the foresaid tenants and residents refuse so to do in the form foresaid, then will all the tenants and the residents foresaid that afterward of that deed, or any of them, be convicted in the Lord's Court by Inquest, that he so convicted shall give to the Lord forty shillings, within fifteen days then next following, and that the Lord's Bailey shall raise the forfeit, forty shillings, of the goods of them that are convicted. And also they grant, that if any of them resette or maintain any strange man after that day, knowing that he have done trespassse to any tenant or resident aforesaid, within the towne aforesaid, then he shall give to the Lord of the Town, forty shillings of his goods to be raised by the Bailey in the town aforesaid, after that he be convicted by the Inquest.

And also the tenants-at-will grant to the foresaid John of Assheton, Knight, that if any of them were rebel, and would not be justified after the Custom and Ordinance of the foresaid town, now made and before time used, that then he shall lose the term of his lands to the foresaid, and shall be removed out of the Lord's land, and the parishe of Assheton. And the foresaid John, grants to the foresaid tenants-at-will, that if there be any free tenants that will not be justified after the Custom and Ordinance of the foresaid town, that he shall not maintain him nor help him, but he shall remove him out of his service, and he shall loose his Love. Also, the foresaid tenants and residents, will and grantyn, that if there be any fighter among them, which shall fight with another in his beginning, after that he be convicted by Inquest, then he convicted, shall give to the Lord half a mark the first time, and if he will not be chastyed by that, the second time he shall give to the Lord a mark, after that he be convicted by Inquest; and if he will not be chastyed by that, the third time he shall give the Lord twenty shillings, after that he be convicted by the Inquest, to be raised by the Lord's Bailey.

Also, they give and grantyn, that if there be any tenant or resident within the foresaid town, that have resetted any fighter with other in his beginning, that the resetter after be convicted by the Inquest, shall amend it to the party grieved, and he shall give to the Lord the pains sette upon him as before is written.

[NOTE.—Here follows a description of the seats in the Parish Kirk, as given in the text.—See pp. 158, 159. The transcriber also appends a note to his translation to the effect that, pages 29, 30, and 31, being only a repetition of the seats in the Church, are wanting in the copy, being of no moment.]



# A COPY OF THE ASSESSMENT

lay'd and appointed in the Fifteenth year of the Reign of James the First, 1618; called the Fifteenth Book, for the Parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, together with the number of Acres in every Inhabitants holding, as the same was lay'd and appointed to remain a precedent for the whole parish.

## ASHTON TOWN.

	Acres.	s.	d.		Acres.	s.	d.
Ralph Cocke .....	31	4	$\frac{1}{2}$	William Walker, junior .....	10	1	$\frac{1}{2}$
William Cocke .....	24	3	$\frac{1}{2}$	George Knott .....	8		$\frac{1}{2}$
Mr. John Hartley .....	40	6		Ralph Stopford and William Wal-	8	1	
William Turner .....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	ker and Company .....			
More in Common .....	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	Thomas Walker for William Cock-	12	1	$\frac{1}{2}$
William Smith .....	10	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	ers .....			
Sir George Booth in Chadwick and				Robert Slater for Knott's .....	1		$\frac{1}{2}$
Knotts .....	6	1		Robert Walker .....	5		$\frac{1}{2}$
Richard Oldham .....	5	1		More in Common .....	12	2	$\frac{1}{2}$
George Cocke .....	14	2		Thomas Knott, senior, and Fulla-			
Sir George Booth for Andrew Ground	3			loves .....	5	1	
Thomas Hammond .....	3	1		Mrs. Mary Raye .....	17	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
More in Common .....	3			Mr. Booth for Cocker's Ground ...	5	1	
Sir George Booth in Mabholes ...	6	1		Sir George Booth for Walker's			
Roger Smith .....	3	$\frac{1}{2}$		Ground .....	20	3	
William Bamford .....	10	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Edward Ridings .....	5	1	
Robert Walker for John Taylor's ..	10	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Thomas Cocker .....	5	1	
George Chadwick .....	12	3		John Purselove .....	1		$\frac{1}{2}$
More in Common .....	14			James Bould .....	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Edward Newton .....	17	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	John Howarth .....	1		$\frac{1}{2}$
John Thorpe .....	17	3		Henry Hurst, William Bould, and			
More in Common .....	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	Henry Hudson .....	4	1	
William Grimshaw .....	18	3		John Smith, junior .....	2		$\frac{1}{2}$
More in Common .....	2			Uxor of William Smith .....	5	1	
John Robinson .....	6	1		Sir George Booth for Walker's de			
John Sandiforth and Ryecrofts ...	7	1		Brooke .....	14	2	
Sir George Booth and Ryecrofts ...	7	1		Oliver Saxon .....	4		$\frac{1}{2}$
William Cocke .....	17	3		Nicholas Cocke for Palin's .....	2		$\frac{1}{2}$
More in Common .....	4	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	George Ashton .....	4		$\frac{1}{2}$
Sir George Booth for Wo. Knotts ..	10	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Nicholas Hyde .....	14	2	
John Smith .....	16	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	Edward Bardsley .....	5	1	
John Knott and Charles Knott ...	4			More in Common .....	1		
More in Common .....	6	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	Ralph Andrew .....	1		$\frac{1}{2}$
Thomas Proctor .....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	Sir George Booth for Ashton and			
Sir George Booth Ground at Mill..	5	1		Bamford's .....	6	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Sir George Booth for the Parkes...	3		$\frac{1}{2}$				
Robert Ashton .....	3	$\frac{1}{2}$					
The Church Field .....	8	1		Number of Acres and Sum layd in			
				in Ashton Town is .....	528	6	6

## AUDENSHAW.

	Acres.	s.	d.		Acres.	s.	d.
John Sandford for Mr. Booth .....	47	6		Thomas Leese for Stanfields .....	1½	½	½
James Walker for Common .....	10	1½		Ralph Thorpe .....	1	½	½
Ralph Wood .....	36	5½		John Bardsley .....	4½	½	½
More in Common .....	4			John Booth .....	6	1	
Robert Stansfield .....	34	5		John Sandford .....	40	6	
More in Common .....	3½			More in Common .....	20	2	
Thomas Hirst .....	2½	½		Henry Saxon .....	16	2½	
Robert Chadderton .....	7½	1		More in Common .....	2½		
Thomas Walker .....	8	1		Ralph Stopford .....	9	1½	½
James Kenworthy, Ex. ....	1½	½		Ralph Ogden .....	2½	½	½
Myles Hulton .....	15	3		Nicholas Gee .....	5½	1	½
More in Common .....	5			Nicholas Cocke .....	3½	½	½
John Heaton .....	6½	1		Seth Booth .....	8½	1	½
Ralph Hobson .....	20	3½		Edward Stanley .....	2½	½	½
More in Common .....	1½			Thomas Walker de Millne .....	14	2½	½
Richard Hobson .....	20	3		Nicholas Saxon .....	26	4½	½
Oats Beeley .....	7½	1		More in Common .....	8½		
George Hulton .....	1½	½		Uxor of Edmund Hulton .....	6½	1	½
William Smith .....	9	1½	½	Uxor of William Hulton .....	2		
Thomas Leese .....	4½	½	½				
Widow Thorpe .....	6	1		Number of Acres, and sum, layed			
James Rycroft .....	6	1		in Audenshaw .....	436½	5	3½

## SHEPLEY.

	Acres.	s.	d.		Acres.	s.	d.
Robert Ashton, Gent. ....	42½	7½		Thomas Kilshaw .....	2½	½	
More in Common .....	4½			Thomas Ashton de Brown Bank...	8	1	
More in his Tenement .....	38½	5½		George Walker .....	2½	½	
The said Robert Ashton, in New							
Ground .....	3½	½		The number of acres, and sum,			
Robert Walker .....	3½	½		layed in Shepley .....	105	1	4

## LITTLE MOSS.

	Acres.	s.	d.		Acres.	s.	d.
William Bell, Gent. ....	60	8		Uxor Lawrance Knott .....	2	½	½
Robert Walker .....	18	2		For Edward Smethurst Ground ...	4½	½	½
John Hulton .....	4½	¾		William Hough .....	½	½	½
John Leech .....	20	3		William Hough de New Houses...	5	1	
Elizabeth Buckley .....	24	3		Thomas Clough .....	16	2	
More in Common .....	1½	½		Thomas Thorpe .....	16	2	
Nicholas Walker .....	2½	½		William Radcliffe .....	15½	2	
James Hulton .....	2½	½		Richard Leese .....	18	2½	
Robert Cropper .....	3½	½					
Nicholas Hope .....	6½	1½		The number of acres, and sum,			
Richard Smith .....	17½	2½		layed in Little Moss .....	240½	2	10
Edmund Heywood .....	3½	½					

## WATERHOUSES.

	Acres.	s.	d.
Samuel Jenkinson .....	22		
Robert Bardsley .....	24		
Uxor of Miles Bould .....	10½		
John Moss .....	14		
The number of acres, and sum, layed in Waterhouses .....	70½		9

WOODHOUSES.

	Acres.	s.	d.		Acres.	s.	d.
James Travis .....	25	4		Samuel Moss .....	5	1	
Nicholas Newton .....	19	3		Anthony Kershaw .....	4		$\frac{3}{4}$
Richard Cumberbeach .....	6	1		John Leese .....	33	4	
Nicholas Newton, and Robert New-				George Leese .....	2 $\frac{3}{4}$		$\frac{3}{4}$
ton .....	8	1 $\frac{1}{2}$		Henry Beswick .....	1 $\frac{1}{2}$		$\frac{1}{2}$
John Hough .....	8	1 $\frac{1}{2}$		Thomas Newton .....	35 $\frac{1}{2}$		4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Robert Slater .....	10	1 $\frac{1}{2}$		Edmund Ashton .....			
Samuel Jenkinson .....	18 $\frac{1}{2}$	3					
William Walker .....	16	2					
John Sandford, of Audenahaw .....	10	1		The number of acres, and sum,			
Samuel Jenkinson .....	11	1 $\frac{1}{2}$		laid in Woodhouses ..	214	2	8 $\frac{1}{2}$

KNOTT LANES, WITH PARK.

	Acres.	s.	d.		Acres.	s.	d.
The Heirs of Taunton .....	78	11		Uxor of John Ogden .....	4 $\frac{1}{2}$		$\frac{3}{4}$
Ralph Bould .....	18	2 $\frac{1}{2}$		John Sandiforth .....	36	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Thomas Slater .....	15	2		John Sandiforth, more .....	6		$\frac{3}{4}$
William Leech .....	13	2		James Goddard .....	5 $\frac{1}{2}$		$\frac{1}{2}$
Ottiwel Cropper .....	11	1 $\frac{1}{2}$		Edmund Fitton .....	9		1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Thomas Gillebrand .....	9	1 $\frac{1}{2}$		Robert Leese .....	7	1	
Thomas Newton .....	33	4 $\frac{1}{2}$		Thomas Heawood .....	16	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Edmund Knott .....	16	2 $\frac{1}{2}$		Lawrance Wright .....	33	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Isaac Dehow .....	31	4		Samuel Andrew .....	5	1	
For Edward Slaters .....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$		John Newton .....	5	1	
John Wilde .....	40	5		The number of acres, and sum,			
Robert Wright .....	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{3}{4}$		laid in Knott Lanes with Park	404 $\frac{1}{2}$	4	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
Joseph Wilde .....	8	1 $\frac{1}{2}$					

ALT HILL.

	Acres.	s.	d.
John Wild .....	46	6	
Ralph Stopford .....	46	6	
Nicholas Hyde .....	43	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	
John Leese .....	24	3	
Thomas Bardsley .....	28	3	
William Wright, in common .....	8	1	
The number of acres, and sum, layed Alt Hill in .....	195	2	0 $\frac{1}{2}$

ALT, AND ALT EDGE.

	Acres.	s.	d.		Acres.	s.	d.
Samuel Andrew .....	3	$\frac{1}{2}$		John Winterbottom .....	17	2	
John Taylor .....	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	1		John Andrew .....	20	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Dean Clough .....	8	1		Myles Andrew .....	15 $\frac{1}{2}$	2	
John Andrew .....	36	5		Henry Taylor .....	45	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Miles Taylor .....	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	1		Uxor John Taylor .....	4		
William Cowdal .....	30	4		Alt Edge .....	45	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	
John Street .....	9	1 $\frac{1}{2}$					
Ralph Turner .....	15	2					
Henry Taylor .....	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$		The number of acres, and			
Ralph Scholes .....	5	$\frac{1}{2}$		sum, layed in Alt and Alt Edge	268 $\frac{1}{2}$	3	0

## LEESE, OR LEES.

	Acres.	s.	d.
John Hobkin .....	81	4	
Myles Andrew .....	25	3	
John Sandiford for Lees land .....	18	3	
Robert Meall .....	13	2	
John Hobkin de Leese .....	5	1	
James Leese .....	2½		½

The number of acres, and sum, layed within Leese..... 94½ 1 2½

## CROSS BANK.

	Acres.	s.	d.
Richard Leese.....	11	1	
Ottiwell Andrew .....	10½	1	
John Leese de Smithy .....	1½		½
John Leese, Tailor.....	2½		½
John Leese, Weaver .....	1½		½
James Bardaley .....	3		½

The number of acres, and sum, layed in Cross Bank ..... 30 5½

## THORNELEE AND HIGH KNOWLES.

	Acres.	s.	d.
James Winterbotham .....	9	1	
George Winterbotham.....	9	1	
George Leese.....	16		2½
More in Common.....	2		
Edward Leese .....	16½		2
More in Common.....	1		
Thomas Lees Lease for House in the lane .....	1		½
James Whittaker.....	1		½
Uxor of George Whittaker.....	2½		½
Uxor of John Buckley.....	9½		1½

The number of acres, and sum, layed within Thornelee and Knowles ..... 67½ 8½

## HARTSHEAD.

	Acres.	s.	d.		Acres.	s.	d.
William Cock, of Cock Bank .....	16			Nicholas Slater .....	½		½
More in Common .....	2	2½		More in Common .....	3		½
Thomas Hazlegrave .....	16			John Marland .....	13		2
More in Common .....	1½	2½		More in Common .....	½		
Nicholas Lilley .....	18		3	Robert Slater .....	1		
More in Common .....	6			George Slater .....	½		
Garvas Walker .....	16			More in Common .....	2		
More in Common .....	¾	2½		John Taylor .....	26		
John Knott.....	16		2½	More in Common .....	2½		3½
More in Common .....	2½	2½		Uxor of Robert Winterbottom.....	25		
Edmund Buckley .....	19		3½	More in Common .....	4		3½
More in Common .....	9½	3½		Thomas Walker.....	24		3
Edmund Harrop.....	9		1½	Uxor of John Slater .....	1		½
More in Common .....	4			John Stansfield .....	2		½
Uxor of William Slater .....	9		1	Thomas Boardman .....	2		½
John Slater.....	8		1				
James Loese .....	17		2½				
Miles Marland .....	4		½				
Edward Slater .....	4						
More in Common .....	3		1				

The number of acres, and sum,  
layed in Hartshead ..... 288½ 3 3

SMALL SHAW.

	Acres.	s.	d.		Acres.	s.	d.
William Bardaley .....	22	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	Thomas Hudson.....	10	1	$\frac{1}{2}$
More in Common .....	5	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	Thomas Harrison .....	15	2	
Edward Walker.....	12	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	James Wood .....	10	1	$\frac{1}{2}$
Robert Leese .....	15	2		Uxor of James Williamson .....	17	2	
William Walker .....	24	3		Anne Leese.....			$\frac{1}{2}$
More in Common .....	7	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	Robert Slater .....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Seath Ashton.....	5	$\frac{1}{2}$	1				
Lyme Hirste .....	7	$\frac{1}{2}$	6	The number of acres, and sum,			
William Slater .....	1		$\frac{1}{2}$	laid in Small Shaw.....	193	2	1
					193	2	1

HURSTE, OR HIRST, OR HURST.

	Acres.	s.	d.		Acres.	s.	d.
Nicholas Hirste.....	35	$\frac{1}{2}$	5	Adam Smith .....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
George Bardsley.....	35	5	$\frac{1}{2}$	John Hill .....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Roger Marland .....	60	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	Edmund Bardaley.....	11	1	$\frac{1}{2}$
More for the Park.....		4		Miles Marland .....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Joshua Leese .....	31	4		Thomas Stopford .....	20	2	$\frac{1}{2}$
Thomas Cocke .....	15	3		Ottiwel Worrall .....	15	2	
More in Common .....	8		$\frac{1}{2}$	William Marland.....	21	3	
Nicholas Leese .....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$				
Uxor of Thomas Bardsley .....	14	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	The number of acres, and sum,			
More in Common .....	3		$\frac{1}{2}$	laid in Hirst.....	288	3	3
John Walker .....	14	2					
					288	3	3

HAZLEHURST.

	Acres.	s.	d.		Acres.	s.	d.
Edmund Leese .....	54	6		Raph Wilde .....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Robert Leese .....	30	$\frac{1}{2}$	4	Uxor of Ottwell Lees .....	2		$\frac{1}{2}$
Andrew Worth .....	23	3		Robert Hough .....	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
John Hill .....	22	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	Uxor of Jarvis Ashton .....	4	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Raph Hall .....	19	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	Henry Slater .....	1		$\frac{1}{2}$
Nicholas Taylor.....	17	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	Robert Bardaley.....	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Raph Hall, for Nicholas Walker				Robert Winterbottom .....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Ground .....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$				
Lawrence Harrop .....	4		$\frac{1}{2}$	The number of acres, and sum,			
Ellen Platt.....	6	1		laid in Hazlehurst.....	192	2	2
Edward Leese.....	2		$\frac{1}{2}$				
					192	2	2

MOSSLEY.

	Acres.	s.	d.		Acres.	s.	d.
John Sandiforth .....	19	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	Barnard Wilde .....	3		$\frac{1}{2}$
John Stalkard .....	15	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	Nicholas Beswick .....	25	3	
Peter Winterbottom, Junior .....	2		$\frac{1}{2}$	Robert Heaward .....	27	3	
Jarvas Walker .....	27	3		Edmund Oldham .....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Ralph Walker .....	1		$\frac{1}{2}$				
John Heape .....	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	The number of acres, and sum,			
Edmund Chadwick .....	3	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	laid in Mossley .....	129	1	5
Hugh Schofield .....	4		$\frac{1}{2}$				
					129	1	5

## LUSLEY, WITH LANES.

	Acres.	s.	d.		Acres.	s.	d.
Robert Ashton, Gent. ....	100	10		Henry Taylor .....	1		$\frac{1}{2}$
John Winterbottom .....	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$		Francis Buckley .....	25		3
John Bradley .....	$2\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$		James Wilde .....	24		3
George Andrew .....	6		$\frac{1}{2}$	Lawrence Leese .....	24		3
Miles Ashton, for Schofield .....	7	1		Uxor of Ottiwelle Waterhouse .....	15		$2\frac{1}{2}$
Richard Taylor .....	4		$\frac{1}{2}$	John Woodfield .....	16		$2\frac{1}{2}$
Miles Ashton .....	14	2		Robert Ashton .....	14		2
Ralph Cocke .....	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$		More in the Street, in Common ...	2		$\frac{1}{2}$
Mr. Ashton for Edward Lowe's ...	$2\frac{1}{2}$		$\frac{1}{2}$	John Leese .....	1		$\frac{1}{2}$
Henry Andrew .....	27	$3\frac{1}{2}$		Nicholas Ashton .....	$8\frac{1}{2}$		$1\frac{1}{2}$
Alexander Andrew .....	26	3		Richard Ryton .....	1		$\frac{1}{2}$
John Buckley .....	1		$\frac{1}{2}$	William Burton, sen. ....	5		1
Miles Ashton de Arlkes .....	$7\frac{1}{2}$	1		William Burton, jun. ....	5		1
Robert Hobkin .....	33	4					
Thomas Walker .....	12	$1\frac{1}{2}$					
Thomas Hurst .....	14	$1\frac{1}{2}$					
Thomas Harrop .....	21	$2\frac{1}{2}$					
				The number of acres, and sum, laid in Lusley and Lanes. ....	$421\frac{1}{2}$	4	6

## LYME.

	Acres.	s.	d.
James Whitworth .....	5		$\frac{3}{4}$
Edmund Whitehead .....	22		3
Richard Whitaker .....	5		$\frac{3}{4}$
James Wilde .....	1		$\frac{1}{2}$
Robert Taylor .....	1		$\frac{1}{2}$
Robert Slater .....	$1\frac{1}{2}$		$\frac{1}{2}$
James France .....	3		$\frac{1}{2}$
Ralph Wilde .....	$1\frac{1}{2}$		$\frac{1}{2}$
The number of acres, and sum, layed in Lyme .....	40		6

## MORE IN NEW GROUND.

	Acres.	s.	d.
John Hobkin .....			$\frac{1}{2}$
Ottiwelle Andre .....			$\frac{1}{2}$
John Marland .....			$1\frac{1}{2}$
Thomas Walker .....			$\frac{1}{2}$
George Hulton .....			1
William Smith .....			$\frac{1}{2}$
William Walker, sen. ....			$\frac{1}{2}$
John Gartside .....			$\frac{1}{2}$
Sum layed .....			$4\frac{1}{2}$

The whole number of acres in Ashton and Lyme, according to the original manuscript, are 4,180 $\frac{1}{2}$ . The true number is 4,208 $\frac{1}{2}$  as far as made out. The whole Fifteen in the parish of Ashton, in the original is £2 9s. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.; but should be £2 9s. 1d., if correctly transcribed.

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EXTRACTS FROM AN INQUISITION RESPECTING RECTORY'S  
&c., IN LANCASHIRE,

*Returned into Chancery, dated 18th June, 1650, and remaining in the Rolles Chapel.*

Ashton ALSO we present, that within the Parish of Ashton, there is one Parish Church, and one P'sonage, and that Mr. John Harrison is P'son of the p'ish Church of Ashton, and supplies the cure, and that he is an orthodox, painfull, able minister. And that there belongs to the said P'ish Church of Ashton, one P'sonage House and certaine Tenements, with twenty acres of land, or thereabouts, amounting to the yearly value of thirteen pounds six shillings and eight-pence. And that the Rents, Proffits, and Tythes, are yearly worth one hundred pounds, whereof the sum of thirteen pounds seven shillings and nine-pence (is payed) and p'tended by p'scription. And we p'sent that the said John Harrison was put into the afforesaid Benyfice by the P'liament, And that Sir George Booth, Knight and Barronet, hath form'lly p'sented ministers to the same. And that the afforesaid Mr. Harrison receives the afforesaid hundred and thirteen pounds six shillings and eight-pence p'annum. And we p'sent that the Tyth Corne of such lands w'ch pay the said p'scrip'con money, if they were payed in kind, are worth more than they pay ffifteene pounds p'annum, as we conceive. We further p'sent, that Alt Edge, within the said P'ishe of Ashton, is distant from the P'ishe Church of Ashton, aboute three myles and a halfe, and three miles from the P'ishe Church of Ouldham, and not soe neare any other Church or Chappell in which place we thinke fitt that a P'ishe Church should be built, and that all within the Boundaries following should be appropriated to the new *p'tended* Church, viz., to begin at the Devycon where Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Cheshire meete, in Mossley Hamlett, and following the little Brooke which divides Lancashire and Yorkshire, 'till it come to the P'ishe of Ouldham, w'ch is at a place called Water Gate Milne, then downe the Diviyon betwixt Ouldham p'ishe and Ashton p'ishe to the Parke, thence to Alt Hill, thence to Lilly Lanes, thence to Knott Hill, thence to Othe upon Lusley, thence down to Barnard Wilds to the Water, including Mossley, thence up the river to the meetinge of the three Shires afforesaid.



AN ACCOUNT OF LAND, &c., BELONGING TO THE RECTORY  
OF ASHTON, 13th April, 1722, in the 8th Geo. 1st.

*To the Right Worshipful Peregrine Gastrell, Esq.,  
Chancellor of Chester.*

A true and perfect Accoampt and Terrier as we can give of all the Glebe Lands, and other possessions belonging to the Rectory of Ashton-under-Lyne, in the county of Lancaster, and Diocese of Chester, as the same is viewed and given into the Right Worshipfull Peregrine Gastrell, Esq., Chancellor of Chester, the thirteen day of April, in the eighth year of the reigne of our Sovereign Lord George, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France and Ireland, King Defender of the Faith, Anno Domini, 1722, by John Simon De la houze, Clerk, Rector of the said Rectory; John Cock, John Newton, Emanuel Smith, gentlemen, and Abraham Hollingworth, Churchwardens of the said town and Parish. *Imprimis*, the mansion-house, seituat in Ashton Town, over the street from the Church north-east, containing, by estimation, six bays, builded cross gabled, and two out H'es, consisting of a hall, three parlours, a buttery, a kitchen, milk-house and brew-house, with chambers over all but the Hall and out H'es, with a stable adjoining to the said house and gate, and so to make up a quaderangle. A corne chamber of about two bays in length, with three rooms under it, and adjoining to it, about a bay of building that hath formerly been a kilne on the south-west of the said house. On the north-side of the way from the church to the house, lyes an old garden or orchard, and on the south-side of the said way lyes a walk and a croft, and at the south end thereof stands a swine coate, in the holding of William Worrall, junr., upon the yearly rent of three-pence. Between that and the street stands two houses in the holding of Robert Grimshaw, Executors, upon the yearly rent of three shillings and a penny. Adjoining to which is part of Thomas Hammond garden, at the rent of four-pence a year, and at the west-side of the said crofts and orchard they joyne to John Cock brickyard, and to James Brown backyard, and the east-side of the said croft and walk joyne to to Cocker's meadow, and clough belonging to Thomas Walker. Upon the north-west side of the said house towards the street is a yard, on the west of which joyning to the parsonage orchard which is on the south, stands an old building in the possession of Henry Cock, upon the yearly rent of eight-pence, on the north of which old building joyns Henry Harropp's garden, with a small building therein, upon the yearly rent of one shilling, close by the north-side of which garden goes down the way from the Parsonage house to the street. On the north-side of which way stands a bay of building in the possession of James Grimshaw or James Wild, at the yearly rent of eight-pence. On the north-east of which said building stands the foot of a post or

prop for Philip Walker's house, paying yearly one penny, betwixt which post and the Parsonage yard is a new building in the possession of Thomas Whitehead, paying yearly fourpence. On the east-north-east side of which building, but east of the fore-mentioned post, and north of Crickity-lane, stands an old long building, four or five bays, in the possession of the Rector, joyning to the east-end of which long building is a house in the possession of Jonathan Higginbottom, upon the yearly rent of two shillings. East of which stands a Great Tyth Barne, six bays from north to south. On the end of which barne stands a house in the possession of William Slater, Executors, upon the yearly rent of two shillings and three-pence. On the east of which stands a house and garden in the possession of Joshua Wood, upon the yearly rent of one shilling, joyning to which eastward is a house in the occupation of Robert Saxon's widdow, upon the yearly rent of one shilling and two pence. Adjoining thereto is a cottage in the possession of Mary Shaw, paying fourpence a year. Above which, on the north-side of Crickity-lane, is a house and croft, in the possession of Daniel Kemp, upon the yearly rent of one shilling and four-pence. Joyning to the west-end of which is John Kershaw's house and garden, upon the yearly rent of eight pence. Joying to the west end of which is a house and two gardens, in the possession of James Grimshaw, upon the yearly rent of two shillings and eight pence. West of which are four dwellings, one stable and garden, all in the possession of John Heywood, paying one shilling and six-pence a year. West of which building, still on the north-side of Crickity-lane, joins a building consisting of two dwellings and a smithie, with an orchard and backyard on the north of it, in the possession of Daniel Smith, upon the yearly rent of four shillings. Adjoining to which smithie stands a house, with two dwellings, a stable and garden, with backyard on the north-side thereof, and now in the possession of James Harrop, upon the yearly rent of three shillings and four-pence. On the north-side of the five lastmentioned backyards and gardens lyes a little meddow belonging to the Rectory, called Thorp's meddow, containing one acre of land, or thereabouts, adjoining to Harper field at the east-end thereof, and at the north-end to Great Cowhill, and on the west-side thereof to Robert Knott's meddow. And lower in the Town, between Arthur Holt's house and Abel Wright's house on the north-side of the street, stands two dwelling-houses and two backyards, and two little crofts, the one in the tenure of Thomas Whitehead, on the yearly rent of six shillings, and the other in the holding of William Walker, upon the yearly rent of three shillings. Also, there belongs to the said Rectory, one long meddow, called the Crookt Withins, on the east-side adjoining part of Ashton Demesne, called Cocker Ground, and on the west-side thereof to Thomas Whitehead land, along by Yoak Brook, and on the north-end to Richard Heywitt's tenement, and on the south-end to Emanuel Smith, gent. meddow, containing by estimation, three acres. And likewise

there belongs to the Rectory, three closes of coarse clay land, lying on the east-end of the Town called the Hays, containing, by estimation, sixteen acres of land, or thereabouts, adjoining on the east-side thereof to part of the Demesne of Ashton-under-Lyne aforesaid, in the tenure and holding of James Hurst, John Saxon, and John Mallinson, and on the north-side to James Hurst tenement, on the west-side thereof to Arthur Holt ground, and on the south-side thereof to Widdow Leech tenement. All which before-menconed premises we value, and are commonly esteemed to be worth twenty-nine pounds per. annum. And also there belongs to the said Rectory, one barne of two bays and a half, standing on the West of Audenshaw, within the said parish. Also, one barne, called the Coat, of two little bays, standing on the West in Lusley, within the said parish. The Tyth Corne, prive Tyth and Custome Money yearly arising and growing due to the Rector of the said Rectory, hath been and we judge to be worth———per annum, and hereunto, we the present Rector and Churchwardens, have sett our hands,

J. Simon, De la houze, Rector,  
 John Cock,  
 John I Newton's mark,  
 Emanl. Smith,  
 Abra. Hollingworth.

Between, The Rev. Sir George Booth, Barronett,  
 late George Booth, Clerk, Complainant, and William  
 Wright, George Kelsall and Martha his Wife, John  
 Booth, and James Kenworthy, Defendants.

In the  
 Exchequer  
 at  
 Westminster.





## Notes, &c., Local and Historical.

### LOCAL NOTABLE MEN.

We are indebted to the late Mr. John Higson, of Lees, the historian of Gorton and Droylsden, who contributed many interesting articles to the *Reporter* under the well-known signature "H," for the following account of a local worthy:—

#### WILLIAM BELL, M.A.

This excellent preacher and writer was born about the year 1604, apparently at Cinderland Hall, in the parish of Ashton-under-Lyne. William Bell, gent., his father, was assessed in 1618 for 60 acres of land, which he held in Littlemoss. The surname of the family is still perpetuated in "Bell Clough," the appellation of a wooded valley to the north-west of Cinderland Hall, in the north-west portion of Audenshaw. Whilst residing with his father at Cinderland, and perhaps officiating as curate at Ashton, Mr. Bell married Ann, one of the daughters of Robert Hyde, of Hyde Hall, in Denton. He had a son bearing the same name as himself and his father, baptised at Ashton Parish Church, as appears from the following extract from the registers: "1633-4, January 28, Baptised Willm, sonn of Willm Bell de Cinderland, Minister." About this period, or very shortly after, he buried his father; for in the Manchester Court Leet Records it is noted that William Bell died before October 14, 1634, leaving William, his only son and heir, of full age. Our next glimpse of Mr. Bell is in October, 1646, when, on the establishment of Presbyterical classes in Lancashire, he appears located as the Vicar of Huyton, near Liverpool; thence he was ejected in August, 1662, whereupon he returned to Cinderland Hall, where he continued to reside for some time, and attended the ministry of Mr. Angier, of Denton Chapel. Again all further traces are lost until 1671-2, when, on the 14th of March, as appears by the register, "Anne wife of Mr. Bell, de Cinderland, Clerke," was buried at Ashton Parish Church. Calamy, in his Nonconformist's Memorial, says that "he was a great scholar and a good orator. He was ordained by Dr. Bridgman, bishop of Chester. He was one who had £50 per annum bequeathed by Queen Elizabeth to four itinerant preachers in Lancashire, who were called the king's or queen's preachers. But both this and his living he left in 1662 for the sake of his conscience. After this ejectment he lived privately at Cinderland, in the parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, being a constant hearer of Mr. Angier, of Denton. In 1672 he returned to his old people at Highton [Huyton] and preached among them by virtue of a license. He left several children behind him, and among the pious two sons, who were conforming ministers. Mr. Bell was a learned and pious man of very considerable ministerial abilities, noted for his neat and

sententious preaching." There is in the nave of Huyton Church a brass plate, thus inscribed to his memory, as is mentioned by Baines in his History of Lancashire:—"Here Underneath Lyeth the body of that Worthy Divine and Most Famous Preacher of God's Word, Mr. William Bell, Mr. of Arts, whose Pithy and Sententious Sermons warmed the Hearts of all Good Christians that Heard him, and whose Pious Life and Holy Conversation was a Continual Sermon to Teach Others Imitation. Hee Dyed, or Rather Begun to Live a Life of Glory, upon Monday, The 10th Day of March, And was here solemnly interred on Wednesday, the 12th day of March, Anno Domini 1683 [*i.e.*, March 12th, 1684, new style], and in the 80th year of his Age, Having been Pastor of this Church A Bove 20 years." Calamy gives a short list of the works of this eloquent preacher, and another old work gives an ampler account, which we transcribe:—"W. Bell, M.A., late preacher of the Word at Hyton, Lancashire, author of 'The Excellency, Necessity, and Usefulness of Patience,' as also of 'The Patience of Job, and the End of the Lord; or, 'The Glorious Success of Gracious Suffering Opened and Applied.' Both of which titled treatises were printed at London, 1674, in octavo, with a preface to them written by Mr. Richard Baxter [Bodl. 8 vo., Z. 42, Th.], which Will. Bell, who was a Nonconformist, and living at Cinderland, in the parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, in June, 1668, I take to be the same with him who was author of (1) 'Well doing, well done to,' serm. on Jer. xxii., 15. Printed 1650 qu. (2) 'Enoch's Walk,' on Gen. v., 24. Printed 1658, oct. (3) 'In Comparable Company Keeping; or, a Conversation on Earth in Heaven,' pr. in oct.

It appears from the Manchester Court Leet Records that on 5th of May, 1685, Edward Goodall, clerk, in right of his wife, is possessed of several houses and lands within the town, which were formerly in the possession of William Bell, clerk, deceased.

These are all the particulars respecting this local worthy which we have been as yet able to discover. What became of his sons we cannot ascertain; but it is just possible that the Rev. Thomas Bell, who was instituted rector of Liverpool in October, 1717, and died about nine years after, was one of his grandsons. It is also possible that some of his treatises may linger even yet in the old fashioned libraries or book shelves of some of the old family dwellings in the parish of Ashton.

## THE TRANSPOSITION OF DATES.

1. It may be well to state here what would otherwise be necessary for us to explain from time to time, respecting the transposition of dates previous to 1752, and the principle upon which it is effected. Also the explanation of what may be a source of embarrassment to the young student of history. It is necessary, then, first of all to remember that the English year before 1752 did not begin till March; that New Year's day was the 25th of March. "So," says Carlyle, "in England, at that time (1603), in all records, writings, and books; as indeed in official records it continued till 1752. In Scotland it was already not so; the year began with January there ever since 1600; as in all Catholic countries it had done ever since the Papal alteration of the *style* in 1582; and as in most Protestant countries, excepting England, it soon after began to do. Scotland, in respect of the *day of the month*, still followed the old style.

'New Year's day, the 25th of March'; this is the whole compass of the fact, with which a reader of these old books has, not without more difficulty than he expects, to familiarise himself. It has occasioned more *misdatings* and consequent confusions to modern editorial persons than any other as simple circumstance. So learned a man as Whitaker, historian of *Whalley*, editing Sir George Radcliffe's correspondence (London, 1810), with the lofty air which sits well on him on other occasions, has altogether forgotten the above small circumstance, in consequence of which we have Oxford carriers dying in January, or the first half of March, and to our great amazement going on to forward butter-boxes in the May following; and similar miracles not a few occurring; and in short the whole correspondence is jumbled to pieces; a due bit of topsy-turvy being introduced into the spring of every year; and the learned editor sits, with his lofty air, presiding over mere chaos come again." In the text in all subsequent parts of this work we shall, as far as possible, transpose the old to the modern mode of dating, giving also the old dates, and leaving the month as we find it, so that if the reader should ever come upon what would appear as a double date, such as for instance, 1425-6 or 1603-4, &c., he will know that the last figure (such as the 6 or 4 in above instance) represents the modern date, and former the date according to the old style. Hence 1425-6 or 1603-4, means 1425, and 1603 according to the old dating, but 1426 and 1604 for our modern calendar.

See Carlyle's *Oliver Cromwell*, Ed. 1871, vol. I., p. 31, note.

## NOTES.

2. RARE AND VALUABLE BOOKS ILLUSTRATIVE OF CHESHIRE.—In a note to the *History of Cheshire*, published at Chester 1778, the writer says that the map of the county promised at the conclusion of the advertisement was never published. Prices (published 10s. 6d.), dent £1 2s., Nafran £1 3s., with additional plates £3.

"*Chester Mysteries, &c.*, 1818, 4to." presented to the members of the Roxburghe Club by J. H. Markland, Esq., F.R.S., Boswell, 3,046, £5 5s. Dent £6 6s. Rhodes 2,967, £12. Sir M. M. Sykes, £12 12s. Brindley, p. iii., £19 8s. 6d., also £22 11s. 6d.

Sir Peter Leycester's *Historical Antiquities*. Fol. 1673. London. Prefixed is a folded map of "The County Palatine of Chester." A very few copies contain a Latin dedication, which was cancelled before publication by urgent request of his publisher. Prices 13s. Hibbert, 19s. Townley, £2 2s. Sir M. M. Sykes, £5 15s. 6d. Map wanting.

"History of Chester, from its Foundation to the Present Time." Chester, 1815, 8vo. (This refers, I suppose, to Dr. Pigott's History, p. 336, with five etchings. 14s.)

Murcot (John). Several works, with his life. London, 1657, 4to., with portrait of the author. Price 7s. 6d. and £2 2s. Aspland MSS.

3. Ashton-under-Lyne and Dukinfield Bridge Company. The Bill for incorporating this Company, formed for erecting a bridge between Ashton-under-Lyne and Dukinfield, passed the House of Lords in 1854, after a severe

opposition offered by the Earl of Stamford and Warrington. The case occupied three days. The opposition entirely failed, and the Bill passed without being burdened by any obnoxious clauses. There are, say the account, 30,000 inhabitants in the borough of Ashton-under-Lyne, and 15,000 in Dukinfield, and only one means of communication for horses, carts, and carriages between these places, and that is situated at the east end of the borough. There will be a small toll for horses, carts, and carriages, but foot passengers will pass free. The Company limit the dividends to 5 per cent, and the surplus is to form a sinking fund for the ultimate enfranchisement of the bridge. Mr. Legh Richmond opposed, on behalf of the Earl of Stamford and Warrington; and Mr. Henry Gartside was solicitor for the Bill.

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4. A CURIOUS REPORT.—In the *Manchester Guardian* of Wednesday, July 21st, 1858, a paragraph appeared headed, "A Shower of Toads." Can any eye-witness give us any information respecting the said remarkable announcement. To us it seems one of those imaginary occurrences which are created by the fancy, or the sense of fun of some of our waggish inhabitants. The paragraph reads as follows:—"Thunderstorm in Dukinfield—Shower of Toads.—A very heavy shower of rain fell here on Sunday, about one o'clock, accompanied by vivid flashes of lightning and loud claps of thunder. The lightning struck a tree near the Dukinfield Recreation Grounds, Cheetham-hill Road, and near to the premises where considerable damage was done by the lightning some years ago. There was also a very heavy shower of rain on Friday last, and after it was over thousands of small toads were found in the Hall Green and about Dukinfield Park. We understand that a couple of handfuls were taken out of one hole, and the children were filling their pockets with them. Many are yet seen in Dukinfield Park."

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5. Bridget Bostock, "The Cheshire Pythoness." See Pennant, in his "Tour in Wales." II., 373, Ed. 1784. Accounts of her marvellous cures will be found in the "Gent's Mag.," XVIII., 413, 414, 448, 450, 513; XIX., 176, 343; XXVIII., 627; LIX., 899. Cited in Aspland MSS.

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6. The Rev. Bristowe Cooper, minister at Gee Cross Chapel for 22 years, died Feb. 1, 1805, aged 55 years. Abigail, his widow, died Oct. 20, 1829, aged 74 years.

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7. Old Robert Assheton died in Dukinfield Dec. 15, 1696, aged 96 years.

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8. Dr. Shippen, parson of the parish of Stockport, died Sept. 29, 1693.

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9. Colonel Robert Dukinfield, Esq., died Sept., 18, 1680, aged about 80 years, and was buried at Denton Chapel. And here lie the remains of Judith, his relict, who died Feb. 23, 1738-9, aged 86, and also the remains of John Dukinfield, their son, who died Oct. 26, 1762, aged 76. It is a common error which declares the Colonel to be interred in the Dukinfield Hall Chapel.

## NOTES BY THE WAY TO SADDLEWORTH.

The following notes on a Ramble into Saddleworth, by "H.," published in the *Reporter* some 15 years ago, place on record so much interesting historical data, and memoranda, that no apology need be offered for their reproduction. The writer started at Droylsden, and

Skirting Ashton Moss by the tiny hamlet of Moorside, better known as "Far-end-o'th'-World," the path lay by Buckley Hill, where stands an old brick yeomanry edifice, erected in the latter half of the 17th century. Keeping forward, we crossed the Oldham Road, and passing through the hamlet of Smallshaw, noticed a beerhouse, with the quaint sign of the "Old Nook," and still boasting a solitary upright timber, a remnant of the framework of which the edifice was once composed. In passing by Broadoak we saw a number of donkeys with sacks of coals on their backs, driven by a couple of men, and which, except for the black dirt and dinge always met with in the vicinity of coalpits, seemed to bear some resemblance to Spanish muleteers. Next climbed we the hill known far and wide as Hartshead Pike, where, within a stone ring or circular enclosure, there is a stout flagstaff, ornamented with a hart's head, in canting allusion to, or as a rebus on the name of the place. We were glad to hear that this old beacon hill is destined shortly to display another beacon, which, if in one sense rendered useless by the electric telegraph, will, at least, be a fine standpoint for obtaining a good view of the extensive and diversified prospect around it. It will also commemorate the auspicious occasion of its re-erection, and hand down to posterity the former use of the site. Some of our company searched the crest of the hill, but in vain, to discover the sites of certain graves, in which, they had been told, it was customary to bury every inhabitant of the district who killed himself by overwork! Along, merrily along, went our company, enlivening the way by skits and jokes, until we drop into Mossley, apparently a very thriving place, containing a chapel of ease erected during last century, and, in an architectural point of view, quite out of keeping, both in design and ornament, with the requirements of the present day. Many are the expressions of surprise at our number, and as many the surmises at our destination; and freely given were many and varied criticisms on our looks and appearance, which we bore in good part, and retorted on with the best of our abilities. Taking the higher road we had the pretty church of Friezland on our right, and shortly after Shaw Hall, a semi-castellated edifice, perched high above the road on the opposite side. The situation is pleasant and picturesque, and the mansion is surrounded by a thriving plantation, in which the throstle, the linnet, and other feathered songsters were making sweet vocal melody. Descending near Greenfield Station, just at the bottom we came upon a low stone-built and grey-slatted woollen mill or dyehouse, known in the neighbourhood as "Frenches," but in the Ordnance Maps marked "French Hays." The structure is two storeys high, and the windows are filled in with very small lozenged panes, and divided by stone mullions into two, three, and four compartments. On one of the window lintels appears a rude and unintelligible inscription, "F. XIX. + VII," and on the



massy lintel of the door, in the type of the period, "IMF, 1715," probably the initials of Jean and Francis Mallalieu, the presumed builders of the structure in the year named. The late Mr. Francis C. Mallalieu, surgeon, who settled at Fairfield, December 1st, 1838, and died there recently, said that his father's name was Frank, whose father's name was John, whose father was George, whose father was Pierre, or Peter Mallalieu, supposed to have been a French Huguenot, who migrated from France on the revocation of the edict of Nantes, by Louis XIV. in 1685, and settling here, and building a fulling mill, imparted the name of "French Hays" from his nationality. The name Mallalieu, meaning "evil (is) the place," is supposed to have been assumed on their going into exile, and to allude to the then unhappy state of France. But this pleasant bit of family romance does not seem to be supported by facts, for in the registers of Ashton Parish Church, a short time ago, we discovered that Francis Mallalewe, of Saddleworth, county of York, husbandman (*i.e.* farmer), and Mary Stansfield (of Audenshaw?), parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, spinster, were married at Denton, sixth of April, 1657, before Robert Hyde, Esq., of Hyde Hall, Denton. This seems to point out an earlier settlement in this part than the period claimed. Rather than being a French refugee of 1685, we incline to the opinion that the mill was merely rebuilt in 1715, but that the Mallalieux were one of the Flemish families introduced into England by Edward III., many of whom settled in this vicinity, and gave impetus and improvement to the ancient woollen trade of the country. Various memorials of the family are to be met with in the registers and connected with the churchwardens' office at Mossley Chapel. The "Frenches Mill" seems to be at a standstill, but the hold of water and the waterwheel still remain intact. As the last sounds come across our ears of the merry peal at "Royal George Church," as Friezland Church is usually designated, we are fast approaching an almost uninhabited, and certainly very bleak and desolate region. Yet the scenery is well worth tramping for a sight of; but unfortunately a mist hangs over the landscape, and in part robs us of the prospect. Here are two bold precipitous hills, known as Alphin, Alphin, or Owphin, and Ealdorman, Oldermann, or Alderman. J. C. Prince has written a pleasing "Winter Sketch from Oldermann," illustrative of his

Musings on the craggy crown  
Of Oldermann, the sterile, stern, and cold.

The legend of the locality ascribes the origin of the name to a giant who dwelt on the hill, whilst another giant, Alphin, dwelt on the opposite eminence. These two worthies were rivals for the love of a fair giantess named Rimmon, who was unfortunately drowned when taking her occasional cold bath one morning in a pool, which bears her name to this day. The ordnance surveyors have perpetuated the name of "Rimmon Pit," as will be seen by a reference to their map of the district. Our authority quotes, from memory, from one of the poems of Samuel Bamford, who speaks of

Alphin, who, as bards have told,  
Strove with Ealdorman the bold,  
Bootless strife for Rimmon fair.

Rimmon perished in the wave.

At length we landed at the solitary hostelry called the Moorcock, but better known as "Bill's-o'-Jack's," from a couple of diabolical murders committed here some 31 years ago. Turning upstairs into a moderately capacious

room, on the walls of which were suspended some primitive-looking candelabra, one portion regaled themselves with "leatherhead tea," whilst the other, in turn, enjoyed their favourite Chinese beverage, for which a very reasonable charge was made. Again: Forward! forward! is the order of the day, until we come to two or three lonely dwellings known as the Isle of Skye. Inquiring the way to Marsden, we received some directions which afterwards were found difficult to follow, owing to the absence of a well defined footpath across the moorlands and heather. After one disappointment and turnback, we ventured, haphazard, across the trackless moor, and soon enjoyed many hearty laughs at the ludicrous somersaults of some of our party when dropping down the side of a cleft or ravine through which meandered a sparkling brooklet. At the bottom we stopped a short time, first to partake of the clear pellucid water, and then to admire a pretty little waterfall, formed by the hand of nature. Next encountered we an irregular circle, or rather oval, of large stones, with a small inner circle, which a zealous antiquary amongst us would fain have traced to the handiwork of the ancient Druids. Whilst passing the fine reservoir formed by damming up the stream, one of our company (a member of the Manchester Amphibiotic Ablutionist Society) stripped, and took a dip, an example soon followed by some others. Several of the excursionists acknowledged that their ideas were expanding, as previously they had not imagined that the whole of England contained as much waste land as they had seen that day, and all within a few hours' walk of their abode. Amongst our number were one or two botanists from Manchester, who, however, have little to say on the botanical aspects of the out, owing to the earliness of the season, few plants having as yet made their appearance. *Ranunculus Hederaceus*, or Ivy-leaved Crowfoot, was found in a ditch near Droydsden; and on the moors were met with *Calluna Vulgaris*, or Common Ling; *Erica Cinerea*, Fine-leaved Heath; *Erica Tetralix*, Cross-leaved Heath, or Blushing-maiden; *Vaccinium Myrtillus*, Bilberry; *Vaccinium Vitis-idaea*, Cow Berry; *Blechnum Boreale*, Northern Hard Fern. Gradually we came again upon land enclosed, if not for cultivation or tillage, at least for pasturage and meadow grass or hay. We realised the full force of the assertion that man is a social being upon coming in contact with some children roaming in the fields, after tramping many miles without seeing aught living save a solitary bird scared from the heather, or now and then a lone sheep browsing on some hillside. After passing along Wessenden, at length we entered the village of Marsden, which we learned was a township situated partly in the parish of Huddersfield, and partly in the parish of Almondbury, with a chapel of ease to the church of the latter parish. The chapel is a stone building, five windows in length, and grey slated. The apex of the western gable is ornamented with a somewhat singular-looking bell turret, and the eastern end is slightly elongated by a small apse, semi-circular in form. In front of the western gable is a memorial stone, inscribed "John Haigh and Daniel Haigh, chapelwardens, when this chapel was rebuilt, 1758." Taking a peep at the interior through one of the windows, it was evident that everything within, as well as without, corresponded with the mean architectural taste prevalent a century ago. There are galleries on three sides, supported by stout wooden pillars, and all the pews are large structures, much resembling the cattle pens met with in fairs and markets. The pulpit is a strange erection, with a huge ugly sounding board above it.

The tables containing the decalogue are ornamented with paintings of Moses and Aaron. The communion table is of oak, and doubtless a relict of the ancient chapel. Inscribed within a circle, on a small square flagstone, slightly reared against the western end, is a loyal memento, probably some fifty years old, bidding us "Fear God, honour the king," and signed J. Whitehead. The old chapel-yard, for there is a new one which we did not see, contains no less than 31 altar, or table tombs, an evidence of the comparatively wealthy state of the inhabitants. Latterly, a few fir, yew, and rhododendron shrubs have been planted to adorn the yard. We copied the following poetical effusion to the memory of Hannah Firth, late of New Ing, in Marsden, who died June 10th, 1845, aged 80 years:—

For forty years till life was ended,  
 God's worship weekly she attended:  
 In morals strict, for peace uncommon;  
 Where shall we find a better woman?

The stone pillars of the stocks, and the lower portion, or footrest, of the shackle, indented for a couple of prisoners' feet, still remain, dreaming of times and customs gone away for ever. A long walk brought us to the top of Stanedge, where we displayed some curiosity in trying to ascertain the exact spot where the waters began to run in the direction of the opposite seas. On, on, we kept, until Saddleworth Church was in view, when we wound thitherward. Just before reaching it, by the side of a rivulet, we noticed a couple of disused water mills, the first quite a ruin, and wanting but a coating of ivy to make it a picturesque object, the other still boasting its waterwheel, though the reservoir is dry. Apparently both had been woollen mills, and during the day we noticed several others, for some reason fallen into desuetude. There is nothing ancient about the church, and very little about the graveyard; but on the south side of the structure there is a venerable group in the shape of a well-built horsing stone of three or four steps, and a pair of stone stocks, which were tested by two of our party allowing their "ankliffs" to be inserted, with room for a third person, but the accommodation was not made use of. Having fastened them in, we left them for a while to enjoy the novelty of the situation, and to be stared at by a few straggling villagers who happened to pass by. The pillars are inscribed "I.W., I.H., 1698;" and one of them has a wrist shackle, and the remnant of another, thus showing it has once been used (or ready for use) as a whipping post for rogues and vagrants. Taking a look at the gravestone commemorating "Bill's-o'-Jack's," and afterwards at the ecclesiastical-looking entrance to the new cemetery of St. Chad's, shortly after we passed the new stone school, now near completion, and which attracted much attention from its neat design, and its lofty and singular, but not inelegant chimney shaft, much resembling those found in connection with some of the old abbeys. Passing through the village we espied a lofty and apparently Saxon cross, standing on the greensward of the garden belonging to Mr. Shaw, the eminent architect and antiquary. Continuing through Greenfield, we passed on to Mossley, and there availed ourselves of the "iron horse," though some of the party held out, and walked every foot of the way home.

H.

## WILLIAM BEDFORD.

The subject of our present sketch, was one of a class of Lancashire working men, who, in the past generation, by their botanical research and exactitude in terminology, laid the foundations of that botanical science in this district, which in the present day has so many admirers, and which, within the last year, has attracted the notice of certain distinguished botanists of the Continent. From a very early period in his life William seems to have had a deep love for nature. The heavens resplendent with a meridian sun, or portentous with wild and livid clouds, alike begat within his soul the deepest feelings. The sea with its rolling tide, its roaring surge, and swelling waters was a boundless delight to him. Often would he reiterate the words of Byron, when, lost in admiration and wonder, as he stood gazing at its briny waves: which heaving, then rushing forward broke innocently at his feet upon the shore:—

“ There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,  
 There is a rapture on a lonely shore,  
 There is society, where none intrudes,  
 By the deep sea, and music in its roar.  
 I love not man the less, but nature more,  
 From these our interviews, in which I steal  
 From all I may be, or have been before,  
 To mingle with the universe, and feel  
 What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.”

The zephyrs of the eventide murmuring around him as he journeyed forth into the lanes, the fields, or by the rippling stream, seemed like a gentle breeze from heaven to soothe his aching heart and ameliorate his difficult lot.

Bedford's love of nature increased as he grew older, so that when the wiles of men, and the hard perversities of the false but familiar friend had caused him to think about the mystery of evil, he was completely confused, and could not answer the questions which naturally presented themselves to his inquiring mind; when suspicion had given place to thoughts truly Agnostic, he turned to nature and worshipped her. If he could not solve the mystery of evil, or by searching find out the Almighty to perfection, a loving and loveable being, whom he could reverently worship and devoutly serve, he could turn to the beauties of nature, draw her lovely objects to his bosom and encircle them in his arms, and though these were transient still he felt that *they* were tangible and real. Hence, when he could no longer feel certain of the existence of an Almighty personal providence he turned to nature and paid his homage at her shrine.

William Bedford was the son of Matthew Bedford of Clayton, West, near Wakefield, Yorkshire. He was born in January, 1811, and was the eldest of twelve sons and two daughters, most of whom died young. Owing to the straitened circumstances of his parents, who had to provide for the necessities of a numerous family, his education was of the most limited character; but being possessed of an ardent temperament, he was most persevering and

thorough-going in all he undertook ; and whenever the sympathies of his nature were thoroughly excited they carried him onward in spite of every adverse circumstance.

His father, Matthew Bedford, when a young man, left Clayton West and came to Stockport, to learn the art of weaving, and here he married the daughter of a soldier named Rosser. Shortly after his marriage he returned to Clayton West, where William was born. It was during his residence here that Mr. John Howard, of Hyde, who had erected a mill for power-loom weaving, and, desirous of obtaining the services of a skilled artizan, heard from some friends at Stockport of Matthew Bedford. Being convinced that he was a person of great versatility of talent, and had considerable tact in the management of men, he made overtures to him, which resulted in his removal to Hyde. While at Hyde Matthew became a member, and subsequently a class leader, among the Wesleyan Methodists. William, with the rest of the family, was sent to the Wesleyan Sunday School, where he learned to read, and to the night school, where, by self-application, he acquired a considerable amount of general knowledge. When very young he started work in Mr. John Howard's mill as a piecer, and in a short time was advanced to the position of a spinner. In 1829, during a strike at Hyde, William accompanied his father to that fatal meeting of workpeople held at the Norfolk Arms, when the floor gave way, and the audience were precipitated headlong into the rooms below, and not fewer than 32 were buried beneath the fallen *debris* and killed. William and his father were, however, among the number who were saved.

Shortly after this sad event Matthew Bedford moved to Stockport, to take the management of the Mersey Mills. Here William changed his vocation, and took charge of the weaving and dressing departments. During his sojourn at Stockport, William married Sarah, the daughter of Richard Wood, and had several children born to him. His father next took the management of the weaving shed belonging to Mr. Frank Clayton, of the same town, and eventually William joined him as overlooker. Why he left Mr. Clayton's employ we cannot determine, but in 1837 he removed to Ashton-under-Lyne. It was during his residence in Ashton that he became more intimately associated with the Socialistic community known as Owenites, and being much superior to his fellow-workmen in ability, he was led on step by step until he became the "very life and soul" of the popular movement in those stirring times, and was looked up to by thousands, not only of the working classes. He was esteemed a worthy man by many persons of superior positions in society. He was revered for his breadth of principle and his undoubted genius.

It was about this time he began his literary labours, and gained great notoriety by his articles to the local papers, under the *nom de plume* of "Sam Shuttletip." His contributions covered a very wide field, and proved him to be a man of no mean ability. He wrote upon such subjects as "Communism," "Social Principles," "The Sorrows of the English Working Man," "Good Government," and on subjects dealing with the various departments of the cotton trade. But the literary efforts which brought him most renown were his articles on Botany, in which he excelled. His style even in prose was very "flowery" and poetical, and he often surprised his readers by the fascinating way in which he dealt with uninteresting and common-place

subjects. He was naturally of a poetic turn of mind. He combined all the true elements of a poet ; but in reading his productions it must not be forgotten that he was only an humble working man, taken like a rough and unpolished stone from Nature's quarry.

In 1849 the inducements offered by the American Government to British emigrants produced a great influx of English working men into that country. William Bedford, having heard most flattering reports of the country far west, determined to trust his fortunes to the precarious conditions then held out across the water. His decision to leave his native land was a great grief and disappointment to many of his friends. They had caught a glimpse of his genius, and were full of hope for his future success. Accordingly a considerable sum of money was collected, and presented to him as a token of esteem from many admirers. With this money he took his family to the great continent, and had granted to him 60 acres of land by the American Government at a place near Minooka. Here he settled down to hard work, and by dint of perseverance made his mark. In recognition of his ability he was made judge of his county, and gained the confidence of all by his faithful service to the State. But misfortune once more overtook him, his crops failed, while the markets were not good. This told so considerably upon the means at his disposal that his spare capital was soon exhausted. The year before his death his crops were good, and he hoped to be able to recoup himself once more. But when he went to the market he found all kinds of farming produce at a much lower figure than he had anticipated, and he gave way to dark forebodings. This was deepened by a domestic trouble which befel him of a very bitter and trying character. He had struggled bravely and long with it, but found his best efforts futile. At length every hope was blasted, and black despair took possession of his mind. The perversities and persecutions of his fellows had in the first instance found him amenable to divine impulses, but worked the natural result of suspicion and doubt in him, and left him, poor soul, without "hope and God in the world." Still he was brave to the very last, with a courage which we cannot help but admire, even while we mourn over his blighted hopes and a sad end.

A letter from Bedford's son, Richard, to his uncle Robert, of Gorton, explains most fully the sorrowful circumstances which led to his father's tragic end. It is dated from Minooka, Oct. 15th, 1861, and is to the following effect :—

"Mr. Joseph Bedford.—Dear Uncle,—I take the present opportunity to write a few lines to you . . . . It is my melancholy duty to inform you of my poor father's untimely and unfortunate death, and also of the chief causes of it. [After referring to a disagreement between his mother and father, he continues.] This, and the low prices of all farming produce during the past year, drove my poor father to desperation, and he left home to return no more. He had a very good crop of corn last year, and he thought that with the proceeds of it he could pay off all he owed and have considerable left. He sold 31 hundred bushels of corn this season, but it did not bring one-half of the price he had anticipated, and he found it impossible to meet his payments according to promise. He left home on the 2nd of August. Brother James and he went to Minooka with the team. In the afternoon, after he had been there a little while, he said he had received a letter from

Joliet, and had to go there on business that night ; so he told James to take the team home, and tell the folks that he would be home on the half-past eleven train next day. This was all we heard from him until the 9th of August, when I received a letter from him dated Sunday, August 4th, two days after leaving home. I have this letter before me now, and I send you an exact copy of a few of the first lines. He begins as follows :—

‘ Dear Richard,— I write to you now to inform you that your mother’s conduct has at length driven me to desperation, and I have left her to return no more. I have also to confess to you that during the past year I have appropriated to my own use nearly 200 dollars of Abel Astle’s money, thinking I could easily pay it back when I sold my corn. This I find impossible to do, as corn is low ; I have therefore determined to see Abel, to tell him the whole of our circumstances, and show him my accounts, which I have with me for that purpose. I shall make the best arrangement with him that I can, and then, as I despair of ever being happy at home, I shall most likely go to the seat of war in Virginia and offer myself to do what I can for the cause of the Union. And now, I hereby constitute you my sole agent for the settlement of my affairs, and I empower you to sell all my personal property of every kind, and, so far as you can, pay off all my debts. I wish you to let the farm to some one, and I would suggest that instead of William building a house he should take the farm, and live on it, paying a reasonable rent for it. Out of the rent I want you to care for James and Tommy, and never forget that I leave them to your especial charge. Do what you can to comfort and aid my dear father and mother, and do the best you can in all my affairs. When Tommy arrives at the age of 21, I wish you to sell the place and divide the proceeds fairly and equally between yourself, Mary Jane, William, James, and Tommy. It is very probable you will never see me again, as I am quite tired of life ; and I therefore wish you to regard these directions as my last ones.’

“ Father then goes on to state what sums he owes and also what is owing to him. He never mentioned my mother only at the beginning of his letter, and makes no provision for her. He ends his letter with the following words :—

‘ And now I bid you all farewell, and hope you will all cling together and help one another along, and if the blessing of your broken-hearted father will do you any good, be assured you have it.’

‘ WM. BEDFORD.’

“ We all expected from this letter that he was going to Abel Astle’s at Boston, and we wrote to Abel begging him to persuade father to stop with him awhile and not to go for a soldier, or else to persuade him to come back home again. This I have no doubt Abel would have done ; but alas ! my poor broken-hearted father never went near him. On the night of the 13th of August I received another letter from father dated New York, August 9th. I send you several extracts from it. He goes on to say in the commencement that he had sent in Abel’s accounts by a man named Whittle, whom he met, and who was acquainted with Abel. The reason why he did not go to Abel himself was because he felt ashamed of having used his money, and was not

able to pay him back out of the sale of his corn. He then stated that he had tried to enlist for a soldier, but had been refused on account of his age and appearance. He said he had taken some steps towards securing a passage to England, as he felt an irresistible desire to go and die there, but, he added, 'this I thought would be a foolish waste of money, and I have determined to die here, and by the time you get this I shall certainly be no more.' He states his determination to put an end to his existence. He next tries to justify himself for this step, and tells me I shall find a trunk at Minooka in a few days with his clothes and money in. I got his letter about sunset, and started out to New York that night in search of him. I got there on the 13th of August. As I had no clue to his whereabouts, I advertised for him in the daily paper, and on the Sunday evening following heard he was dead at a place called Yonker, 16 or 17 miles from Battery, up the Hudson River. I went next morning, and found that he had been buried four days. He was found dead in the wood, having taken a small vial of laudanum. After taking the laudanum he had sat himself down and described its effects upon him, and kept writing until he fell asleep to wake no more. He does not seem to have had much bodily pain; his last words are written as well as his first; he appears to have been quite collected. He was buried in the Episcopal yard at Yonker. He took the fatal draught on the 10th, the day after writing to me. I paid all his funeral expenses, and bought the grave, and put a gravestone over it, and collected what few articles were found on him, and then started for home again.

"From your affectionate Nephew,  
"RICHARD BEDFORD."

In the Yonker's paper we have a full account of the inquest that was held over the body, and a letter written by him prior to his decease describing the result which the laudanum had upon him as long as he was conscious. We subjoin in detail the account as given in the paper referred to above:—

### CORONER'S INQUEST.

Coroner Lawrence held an inquest on the body of William Bedford, who was found dead in the woods of T. Ludlow on Tuesday. The deceased, it appears, is from Minooka, Illinois, where he has a family now living, and his death was produced by laudanum administered by himself with the avowed purpose of self-destruction. On his person were found two one-dollar bills on the Hudson County Bank, Jersey City, a penknife opened, apparently to use in severing one of the veins in his neck, to make sure work of it in case the laudanum should prove a failure, sixteen cents in change, a vial, and a letter, which we have copied in full for the interest of our readers:—

"My name is William Bedford; I am from Minooka, Grundy County, Illinois; I am about to end my life by taking laudanum, and there will be no need to hold an inquest over me, as it is solely my own act and deed, caused by adverse circumstances. When I am found I desire that some kind person will send a note to my son, Richard Bedford, Minooka, Grundy County, Illinois, notifying him of the fact."

The above was evidently written by him some days previous to his death, and the following letter, written after partaking of the fatal draught, and

iv.



found upon his dead body, gives a remarkably cool and graphic description of his feelings previous to the last thread of life being snapped asunder :—

“ August 10, 1861.

“ I have just swallowed the laudanum in a small quantity of brandy ; do not feel much effect from it yet, except a bitterness in my mouth and throat, and a little trembling in my hands ; as near as I can judge it is about fifteen minutes since I took the laudanum ; the effects feel exhilarating like those of intoxicating drinks. No pain, and the scenery of the Hudson River, with their wonderful rocks, the palisades, seem grand and glorious ; my heart aches and my eyes weep for my friends and children—especially for my boys James and Thomas, but I hope they will not grieve much at my lot, and that they will try to be good boys. I should think it is now half-an-hour since taking the laudanum ; begin to feel rather sleepy.—Another quarter of an hour must have elapsed, and I feel additionally sleepy, but the sensation is, on the whole, pleasant.—Quarter of an hour later, I feel a bitterness and dryness in my mouth and a tendency to lay down and go to sleep ; but I shall resist it as long as I can. The quantity of laudanum I took was the small vial full, which will be found in the side pocket of my coat. I begin to fear that it will not be sufficient, though I now feel additional sleepiness, and it must be an hour and a half since I swallowed it, but I have no timepiece, and cannot tell accurately.—Quarter later, feel as if I could not help going to sleep soon ; I am trying to read a paper called the *Phunny Phellow*, but my ideas begin to get confused, as they have done many a time before when I have fallen to sleep reading.—Quarter of an hour later, more sleepy, with dryness in the mouth and throat, but no pain.—I think it must now be two hours since I took the dose ; I feel more confused in mind every minute—sometimes finding myself, despite my efforts, falling to sleep. But it don't feel unpleasant.—It must be a quarter of an hour later, and I had just fallen to sleep, and have waked again, as I have many a time before in trying to read after a hard day's work.—Great difficulty in keeping awake, and shall have to lie down soon ; I cannot read many lines without nodding ; cannot keep awake one minute at once, and must soon give way ; dream about many absent friends, and sometimes fancy I am at home. I have tried walking about, but it is no use.—Cannot keep awake, and feel a trembling all over, as I have done before when a long time without food ; cannot calculate the time, think it must be three hours since I took it. Feel a little inclined to vomit, but hope I shall not do so : have walked about a little, and the sickness is nearly gone away, but my limbs tremble considerably.—I have lain down awhile—don't know how long—and have dreamed as usual about the dear friends at home ; very sleepy indeed, and my mouth and throat dry—end.”

So closed poor Bedford's life, with all its fierce temptations, its painful burdens and struggles. Had he lived he might have become famous, for he possessed many fine traits of character and much of the poetic passion and fancy. He left several sons to mourn his loss, one of whom has become a doctor of considerable repute, having a large and important practice in Chicago ; while another succeeded his father in the magistracy or “ Judgeship ” of Grundy County.

In introducing the reader to a few specimens of Bedford's poetry, it must be borne in mind that he had no scholastic advantages. That all he knew he had gathered in the schools of nature and experience. It could not, therefore, be expected that he would never fall into errors of rhyme and rhythm; even those who have laid claim to a higher education have fallen into such mistakes. It is highly probable that he knew nothing of the fine distinctions of the Trochee, Spondee, and Iambus; the Dactyl and Anapæst, or the Amphimacer and Amphibrach, hence his poetry may be defective from these points of view. He never assumed to be a master of pedantic regulations, but, moved by the muse, he wrote without staying to consider whether it was according to classic distinctions or the rules of meter or rhyme. But apart from any scholastic merit, the poems have a value peculiarly their own, and evince, though untutored, considerable poetic fancy, and power of expression; and we doubt not that they will be read with a deepened interest, with the knowledge of the singular experiences through which the author passed.

#### THE POET'S GRAVE.

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Oh ! bury me not in a churchyard grave,  
 But down in some woodland dell ;  
 And over my head let the wild flowers wave,  
 The flowers I love so well.  
 Let the primrose pale, that scents the gale,  
 And the daisy there be found ;  
 Let the harebell blue, and the violet too,  
 And the campion, blossom round.

Oh ! bury me by some runlet's side,  
 O'er which the woodbine throws  
 Its graceful arms to clasp its bride,  
 The bonny blushing rose.  
 Let my grave be made 'neath some oak tree's shade,  
 Some tree both old and gray,  
 Whose stem is bound with ivy round,  
 To cover its decay,

There lay me down at the close of day,  
 When the flowers their petals fold,  
 And the setting sun's last glorious ray  
 Doth bathe the earth in gold.  
 Shed not a tear upon my bier,  
 No rite perform for me ;  
 Let the song of the thrush, in the hazel bush,  
 My funeral service be.

And oh ! let never a stone be placed  
To mark where I am laid ;  
But with Nature's green let my bed be grac'd,  
In Nature's garb array'd.  
Then bury me not in that tainted spot ;  
Where the dead lie heap'd around ;  
But give me, I crave, a woodland grave,  
Where sweet wild flowers abound.

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### THE FAITHLESS ONE.

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I saw her—lov'd her—my love she return'd,  
And I thought time and absence could never  
Extinguish the flame in our bosoms which burn'd ;  
For she vow'd to be constant for ever.

I left her, stern duty's commands to obey,  
And with tender embraces we parted ;  
She sigh'd and she wept as I turn'd me away,  
And appear'd to be quite broken-hearted.

I return'd after days, weeks, and months had gone by,  
My love by long absence grown warmer ;  
And flew on the wings of impatience and joy  
To claim the dear hand of my charmer.

I saw her,—it almost deprived me of breath  
As I strove my emotions to smother,  
She stood at the altar and plighted her faith,—  
She plighted her faith to another !

She stood at the altar so lovely and fair,  
With her handsome young bridegroom to cheer her ;  
And knew not that one in the depths of despair  
Was standing in agony near her.

Those lips, I so often, so fondly had press'd,  
A vow deep and binding were speaking ;  
And never a pang seem'd to trouble her breast  
At the thought of the vows she was breaking.

I spoke not—but feeling what words cannot tell,  
I hasten'd away in my madness !  
For though she was faithless, I lov'd her too well,  
To give her one moment of sadness.

## DIALOGUE BETWEEN ASHTON OLD CLOCK AND BELLS.

COMPOSED IN 1842.

One dark stormy night, as in pitiful plight  
Through the churchyard of Ashton I passed,  
I shelter'd awhile, in the nook of the pile,  
From the rain which fell heavy and fast,

And while I stood there, a noise I did hear,  
Which made me look round me with dread ;  
For I very soon found that the mournful sound  
Did proceed from the steeple o'erhead.

Now, you'll think that I lie; but I don't—no, not I,  
For as sure as there's water in wells—  
A discourse I did hear, which took place, I declare,  
'Twixt the Church Clock and one of the Bells.

"Oh! good lack-a-day!" the Clock it did say,  
"My heart is both heavy and sad  
To think I should be thus ill-used, do you see,  
It's enough to make any clock mad.

You know that from youth I have always told truth,  
And it brings bitter tears to my eyes,  
Thus idly to stand, without moving my hand,  
And tell people nothing but lies.

For to each that comes by, and lifts up his eye,  
Inquiring the time of the day—  
Be it morning or noon, late at evening or soon,  
A quarter-past five I still say.

Though I'm not to blame, I've lost my good name,  
To redeem it I never can hope;  
So now in despair I will swing I declare,  
If you'll only just lend me your rope."

"My rope, Mrs. Clock, how my feelings you shock!  
Don't you know that the very same day  
That your ticking was stopped my bell-rope was cropped,  
And taken completely away?

But, though, since that time I've not uttered a chime,  
Don't imagine I'm down in the maw;  
No, I'll let people see, if they put upon me,  
That I do not care for them a straw.

And it grieves me to hear you talking so queer  
About hanging yourself.—Oh! dear me!  
Don't yourself make away, but have patience, I pray;  
Why, they'd bring it in *felo-de-se*!

And what if you do tell a story or two,  
And thus leave folks sadly i'th' lurch,  
Why should not the people be gulled from the steeple,  
As well as be gulled in the church?"

"Oh! its all very well for you, Mr. Bell,  
Who the ways of the world do not see,  
And who never once look from your dark, dismal nook,  
To talk about patience to me.

But could you descry all the people that pass by,  
And hear all their gibes and their sneers,  
Your fine patience would go quickly I know,  
And you'd wish you could (w)ring all their ears."

" Well, well, my dear friend, I don't wish to offend,"  
Said the Bell, in a calm soothing tone ;  
But obliged I shall be if you'll tell unto me  
Why out of employment we're thrown ?"

" Why, you see, sir, 'tis here, the people I fear  
Are getting too wise for the church ;  
For plainly they say, no church-rates they'll pay,  
And thus we are left in the lurch.

For the Church being *poor* as it is, to be sure,  
It cannot afford for to pay  
For winding me up, and pulling your rope  
On holidays merry and gay."

Says the Bell, " But egad ! it looks rather too bad  
That the church should neglect its friends thus :  
If such sums it can spare its own front to repair,  
Why not spare a trifle for us ?"

" Yes," the clock did reply, " and I'd like to know why  
Such expense has been squander'd away  
In carving the shape of those curs'd, ugly apes,  
Which the front of the church doth display.

There is one I can spy, appears winking his eye,  
(On a church such things should not appear)  
He seems for to say to all passing this way ;—  
There's nothin' but gammon in here.

Now, at these things I'm so vex'd, and sorely perplex'd,  
Nay, I'm almost o'erwhelm'd with my grief ;  
And between you and me, there's but one way I see,  
In which we can hope for relief.

" 'Tis here ; should the Whigs, who have long run their rigs,  
By the Tories be ousted ; why then,  
The church-folks would be so well pleased, do you see,  
They'd set us a jogging again."

Says the Bell, " Then I pray that Lord Derby may  
Very soon"—here I happened to cough ;  
Cries the clock, " I much fear that a list'ner is near."  
And thus the discourse was broke off.

Now the wind and the rain had abated again,  
And as homeward I turned me away ;  
determined, to tell what the clock and the bell,  
While conversing together, did say.

#### A L A M E N T F O R M Y S O N .

COMPOSED PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE TO AMERICA, AND PUBLISHED IN A PAPER ENTITLED  
"THE NEW MORAL WORLD," AND SIGNED, "A SOCIALIST."

The setting sun sinks slowly in the west,  
The clouds of evening gather round the sky,  
And night approaches with her sable vest,  
Shrouding each object from the watchful eye :  
The sons of toil no more their labours ply,  
But wearied, slowly homeward bend their way ;  
The thrush hath ceased its song, and now doth fly  
Unto its nest, to wait the coming day—  
Upon the morning breeze again to pour its lay.

O ! it is pleasant at this silent hour  
To wander forth and give those feelings vent,

Which else, with mighty and resistless power,  
 Would burst the heart in which they have been pent;  
 'Tis sweet to weep for friends whose course is spent,  
 But whose dear forms can ne'er forgotten be;  
 When no ear listeneth and no eye can see:  
 And thus, my darling boy, thy father weeps for thee.

Oft hast thou at the pleasant hour of eve  
 Ran forth to meet me coming home from toil;  
 And when with anxious care my mind did grieve,  
 Hast banished sorrow with thy sunny smile;  
 Thou didst my heart of many a pang beguile,  
 Whilst to thy artless tales I lent an ear:  
 But now thou slumb'rest deep below the soil,  
 And seest not thy father's sorrowing tear:  
 I call upon thy name, but oh! thou can'st not hear.

How often, when the fairy hand of spring  
 Had scatter'd beauties o'er her wide domain,  
 Have we gone forth on pleasures airy wing  
 To roam together over hill and plain,  
 New health from every passing breeze to gain,  
 And pluck the flow'rets from their verdant bed,  
 Which thou wouldst bring and beg me to explain  
 Their various names, whilst I to please thee sped:  
 Oh! these were happy hours, how quickly have they fled.

But lonely now through well known paths I rove,  
 Nor feel thy small soft hand enclosed in mine;  
 Nor press thy downy cheek with lips of love;  
 Nor see thy dark eyes with affection shine.  
 To hear again thy voice, I vainly pine;  
 I vainly long once more thy form to see:  
 The worm now revels on that cheek of thine,  
 And that dear hand is cold, as cold can be;  
 And soon where thou art laid the grass will cover thee.

I fondly hop'd to see thee live and thrive,  
 Growing in wisdom and in virtuous ways;  
 Until at man's estate thou shouldst arrive,  
 And be my comfort in declining days;  
 To guide thy feet from errors thorny ways,  
 Where thousands sunk in sin, untimely fall;  
 To fix on truth's bright orb thy youthful gaze,  
 And keep thy young mind free from priestly thrall;  
 This should have been my task—but death hath settled all.

Yet still some consolation doth remain,  
 To ease my heart and check the falling tear:  
 Thou ne'er shalt feel oppression's galling chain,  
 Nor be a slave to superstitious fear.  
 Grief, woe, and sorrow, never can come near  
 Thy silent couch, nor break thy dreamless rest;  
 Misery and want can never reach thee there,  
 Nor anxious care disturb thy peaceful breast—  
 No sin, with its dark stain, thy purity infest.

No! there thou liest free'd from all their power,  
 Unconscious now of sickness or of pain;  
 And death, whose arrows make the stoutest cower  
 Can never make thee feel their smart again.  
 Thoughts, such as these, relieve my aching brain,  
 And check the torrent of my inward woe;  
 But still they cannot all my grief restrain;  
 The tear, at times, will to thy memory flow,  
 Until my head, like thine, is laid for ever low.

## JOHN EATON.

It is proverbial with Ashtonians to make themselves acquainted, as far as possible, with the antecedents of their venerable townspeople who have lived useful and respected lives, and gone to their final home with the furrows of time upon their brow. It so happens that every one has his own peculiarities; but among no class, we think, is this more so than with old veteran ringers. With them he would cast off that reserve which he maintained most rigorously at his home and with his relatives. He would converse with them in frankness upon matters which "no other ears must hear." In these moods he has related many stories, which, had they been preserved, would have made an interesting volume. Nothing of note in his native town escaped his observation. He had hoarded up many pieces of biography which would have been of interest to future generations, but these by some means have either been lost or destroyed.

Mr. Eaton first saw the light of day in the month of June, 1793, and the house in which his parents resided at that period was situated in what was called the "dig-pool," or a kind of orchard—a beautiful slope, or what is now a portion of the graveyard, between the old schools and the Old Hall. In this secluded place the subject of this memoir spent the days of happy boyhood, little dreaming that he was destined to see the homestead removed, and the lovely spot, with the orchard, filled up in order to extend the churchyard. When a boy he took a great fancy to ringing, and began his career as such by being a constant companion of the belfry—assisting at morning vespers, and in chiming the peals that floated in the air on the holy Sabbath. He so engrafted himself in the good opinions of the campanologists, that they took a pleasure in gratifying his desire for learning the change-ringing. He ultimately gained some notoriety throughout the country as a ringer. Besides having a musical taste, "Old John" was a poet, and was often appealed to in case of death to compose some lines *in memoriam*. The following is one of those productions:—

Skilled in the mystery of the pleasing peal,  
Which few do know, and fewer still reveal;  
Whether with little bells, or bells sublime,  
Could split a moment to the truth of time.  
Time he often truly beat, at length o'ercame,  
Yet may this tribute long preserve his name.

In the year 1855, a well known doctor in Ashton, residing in the neighbourhood of the Parish Church, forwarded the following to the *Ashton Reporter* for publication:—

## "THOSE ASHTON BELLS."

Do, I pray, Mr. Editor, find a corner for the subjoined lines, which I have taken the liberty of copying from *Punch*, and slightly altering to suit our locality. All who live so near the Parish Church as myself will, I am sure, heartily coincide with me in wishing the bells at Timbuctoo, or, in fact, anywhere else where their noise and clamour would not drive to distraction your obedient servant,

A SUFFERER.

Ashton-under-Lyne, November 2nd, 1855.

Those Ashton bells, those Ashton bells,  
How plain a tale that music tells  
Of fees and beer, that buy the time  
Of those who raise their senseless chime.

Those foolish times are passed away,  
When people liked the belfry bray,  
With absent priests and churchyard smells,  
We class those pest'ring Ashton bells.

Were ringers' swipes and swindles gone  
That vulgar voice would not go on;  
The fact from Old Church steeple knells  
That pewter pots are Ashton bells.

These lines gave great offence to Mr. Eaton, who replied through the same medium as follows:—

"THOSE ASHTON BELLS" AGAIN.

The bells are ringing merrily from out the Old Church tower,  
And genial spirits, far and near, can feel the glad'ning power;  
And floods of floating harmony come streaming o'er the wind,  
That in each warm and hearty soul a noiseless echo find.

But near this same Old Church there lives a soulless dismal wight,  
Whose atrocious fidgetings have urged him on to write  
Some second-hand and sorry verse, with which the jaundiced eyes  
Of slow, misled teetotallers alone can sympathise.

May grim cærulean-vested imps possess him for their own,  
And doleful dumps oppress his soul, dull, cheerless, and alone;  
And let him when the parish chimes sound blithely overhead,  
Go stuff his ears with cotton waste, and tumble into bed.

Again he returned to the charge in the lines entitled—

"SALVE FOR THE SUFFERER."

Thou scribbling fool, thou scribbling fool,  
Who, far apart from reason's rule,  
Writes senseless trash, in trashy verse,  
Rhymeless, chimeless, witless—worse!

'Twere better to while thy time away  
By mimicking the donkey's bray,  
Than stain good paper with the ink  
Of brainless dolts who never think.

What, Sifrah! have the bells that toll  
No music for thy soulless soul?  
What! have the chimes of early day  
No power thy lumpish mind to sway?

Then hold thy hand, and drop thy pen,  
Betake thyself to some chill den,  
Where neither priests nor church's spire  
May stir thy bile nor move thy ire.

Be off at once to "Timbuctoo,"  
With all the meddling, grumbling crew,  
Who seem to feel as dismal spells  
The music of "Those Ashton bells."

Mr. Eaton had been a ringer in the Ashton Parish Church upwards of 62 years, and was the last person who rung in the old tower, which was in 1817—the new one being commenced on the 12th of December in that year, and completed on December 11th, 1818.



There is no record of all the peals he rung, but among the many various methods is one 5,000 Plain Bob Royal ; five 5,000 and one 8,000 Treble Bob Royal ; seven 5,000 Grandsire Triples ; fourteen 5,000, one 7,000, and one 10,000 Grandsire Caters ; and two 5,000 Grandsire Cinques ; thus making, as far as can be ascertained, 32 peals in different parts of the country.

He was tutor of several ringers in different parts of the country, On the 2nd of September, 1872, the Ashton ringers took part in a contest at Eccles, and were successful in securing the first prize. Mr. Eaton was one of the selected judges, and he composed a poem commemorative of the event.

He was also well known in another capacity, that of town crier, having succeeded Daniel Wood at his death in 1860, and the court leet gave him the appointment of the obsolete office of ale-taster. Upon one occasion, during a thunderstorm, he had a most miraculous escape, for the handle of his bell was struck by lightning, and split right up the centre without doing him the least harm. He took pleasure in making entries in his books of particular events, which are not of any great public interest.

He died suddenly at his residence in Wellington-street on Monday evening, October 5th, 1874, in the 83rd year of his age. An inquest was held on the following day, when the jury returned the verdict of "Died from loss of blood, through the rupture of an internal blood vessel." He was interred in St. Peter's graveyard, and his remains were conveyed to their last resting place by his comrades. J. Gillott, J. Thorpe, D. Heap, R. Cheetham, T. Wroe, L. Broadbent, C. Thorpe, and J. Andrew. The Rev. J. Harris, curate, conducted the funeral service, at the conclusion of which he made special mention of the career of Mr. Eaton as a campanologist.

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### MRS. WOODS.

MRS. WOODS was the eldest daughter of Charles Hindley, Esq., M.P. for Ashton-under-Lyne, and was born October 9th, 1831. The place of her nativity was a sequestered and delightful spot called "Grove Cottage," situate in Sandy Lane, Dukinfield, once the residence of Charles Hindley, Esq., M.P., and at the time of Mrs. Woods' decease was inhabited by Charles Frederick Hindley, Esq., his nephew.

At an early age she lost her mother ; but after she had attained her eighth year, the place of her maternal parent was filled, Mr. Hindley, in 1839, marrying a second time. Under the affectionate care of her step-mother, her early mind became thoroughly imbued with the principles and spirit of the gospel, and she was prepared to carry out those works of benevolence and usefulness which characterised her after life.

In company with the other members of Mr. Hindley's family she attended the Moravian Chapel, Dukinfield, and of the Church worshipping there she became a consistent and esteemed member. In connection with this place of worship, her zeal for the promotion of religion and education manifested itself in the active and laborious exertions she made, in co-operation with her family, in founding and establishing a day and Sunday school. These efforts were crowned with abundant success, for the school soon attained great prosperity and growing usefulness.

The mother of Mrs. Woods, Mr. Hindley's first wife, died July 15th, 1837, and being a most estimable lady and much beloved by a large circle of friends and acquaintances, her husband was solicited, and indeed importuned, to sanction the erection of a monument to her memory; but to this, in the usual acceptation of the term, he steadily objected, and the only monument to the erection of which he would for a moment listen was that of an educational establishment. This arrangement was carried out by Mrs. Woods and her sister, Susan Hindley, who collected from the friends and admirers of their departed mother the sum of £1,000, and this originated the extensive and efficient schools connected with the chapel of the late Rev. Samuel Martin, in Westminster.

Mrs. Hindley and Mrs. Woods co-operating established a school for the instruction of the destitute, ragged, and neglected children of the densely populated Borough of Ashton; and into this project they most heartily entered, not as patrons and benefactors simply, but as ardent, persevering, and self-denying labourers; gathering around them the most repulsive objects of their charity, to whom they imparted instruction and encouragement, and to this arduous work they devoted themselves until failing health compelled them to relinquish the task.

In July, 1854, Miss Hindley was married to Mr. Woods, of Wigan, and in a few months afterwards Mrs. Woods was introduced to that town, to which place she transferred her benevolent and devoted labours. She, at once, gave evidence of her desire to assist in promoting the welfare of local charities and educational establishments, and her co-operation was hailed with joy and gratitude by those already engaged therein. In acts of kindness to the young, in the personal and frequent inspection of schools, especially that connected with St. Thomas's Church, and the familiar visits to the homes of the poor, Mrs. Woods employed much of her leisure time, and became at once extensively useful and universally beloved. None knew better how to distinguish between the bounty which pauperises the receiver and the timely aid which encourages to exertion, and hence her personal charity was not merely productive of temporary relief to the distressed, but of a higher and far more honourable result, for it stimulated to that self-reliance and earnest effort which leads inevitably to advancement in life.

In March, 1857, Mr. Woods was elected one of the representatives in Parliament for the Borough of Wigan, whereupon he moved to London, during the Parliamentary session, and it was while residing there that the death of Mrs. Woods occurred which filled many hearts with the most profound sorrow. Her spirit passed away on Sunday, 12th of July, 1857, at Dartmouth House, Westminster, a few days subsequent to her accouchement, having given birth to a daughter. She was only in her 26th year, but by her most unassuming and unobtrusive manners and gentlest of dispositions, she had secured for herself the affection and esteem of a large circle of friends. Her piety was consistent and decided. She has left an excellent testimony to the goodness of her disposition and the superiority of her talents in the interesting narrative of a journey to Jerusalem, which was published some years ago, under the title of "Life in the Tent," which speedily ran to a second edition.

Written simply and unaffectedly, for the purpose of supplying original information to the humblest classes concerning the ancient lands, it is superior to many more pretentious volumes.

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### MRS. SUTCLIFFE.

THE following brief sketch of the life and labours of Mrs. Jonathan Sutcliffe is taken from a funeral sermon delivered by the Rev. J. G. Rogers, B.A., in Albion Street Chapel, on Sunday, the 13th of June, 1858. Mrs. Sutcliffe was the daughter of Mr. Nathaniel Buckley, of Carrhill, Mossley, a gentleman well known in this district. From a very early age she was interested in religious and philanthropic objects, being one of the most constant teachers in the Sabbath-school at Albion Street Chapel, then in its infancy. In May, 1819, she was united to the Rev. J. Sutcliffe, and during the whole period of his residence in Ashton was a most efficient helper in his various works of usefulness. Her genial spirit, her active benevolence, her true-heartedness, and her devoted piety, well qualified her for the important position she had to fill. She was a welcome visitor in the homes of both rich and poor, and taught both alike to regard her as a friend, often cheering them in sorrow by her sympathy, and aiding in perplexity by her wise and sagacious counsel. For more than 32 years she pursued a course of quiet, unpretending usefulness, the memory of which lingers, and whose fruits are to be found at this day. In the beginning of 1852 she removed to Longsight, where Mr. Sutcliffe had accepted another church. In her new sphere she displayed the same qualities which had made her so valuable and beloved at Ashton, and soon gathered a fresh circle of attached friends. Her increasing infirmities, however, soon incapacitated her for that active labour in which she had ever found so much pleasure. Seeds of disease, which had been sown some years previously, began to bear fruit, and for some time prior to her death she was the subject of severe bodily affliction. But throughout the whole she preserved that cheerful serenity of temper, that forgetfulness of self, and that careful thought for others by which she had always been distinguished. Her life was the embodiment of a simple exhortation she addressed to her daughter shortly before her death, "Live for others and for God, and you are sure to be happy." Acting on this, yet resting on the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, it is not wonderful that her life was useful and her death tranquil. Her last sufferings were great, but they were patiently endured, and her end was peace. She quietly fell asleep in Jesus on 1st of June, 1858. The esteem in which she was held in this neighbourhood was indicated by the crowded congregation which assembled to hear the sermon.

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## JONAH HARROP, ESQ.

JONAH HARROP, Esq., was the only son of Jonah Harrop, Esq., of Bardsley, who died in 1814, by Elizabeth, daughter of John Kershaw, Esq., of Copster Hill, near Oldham. He was born on the 22nd of February, 1799. He was partly educated at Fairfield, near Ashton-under-Lyne, and partly at Weaverham, Cheshire, where he was greatly distinguished by the quickness of his apprehension, his kind disposition, and the ease with which he excelled other young men of his age at games and exercises of an athletic description. It was whilst at school at Weaverham that he made the acquaintance of Mary Ann, daughter of John Davies, Esq., of Bedlwyn, in the County of Flint, who became his first wife in 1818, though he had then scarcely completed his nineteenth year. By that lady (who died in 1852) he had four children, namely—1st, John Jonah, formerly pupil of the celebrated Rev. William Parr Greswell, of Denton, and more recently an undergraduate of Brazenose College, Oxford, who died unmarried at Dunkirk, in France, in 1857. 2nd, Mary Anne, who married, in 1840, Samuel D. Lees, Esq., M.D., of Grey House, Ashton, but who died in 1850, leaving a son, Albert (who died unmarried in 1862), captain in the 23rd Lancashire Rifle Volunteers; and two twin daughters, Mary Ann and Agnes. 3rd, Elizabeth Margaret, who married, in 1845, the Rev. Arthur Hyde Hulton, B.A., then incumbent of Christ Church, Ashton, who died in 1858. He was the second son of the late William Hulton, Esq., of Hulton Park, in the county of Lancaster, by whom she had issue two sons and a daughter, namely, Harrington, Montagu, and Agnes. 4th, Caroline Agnes, afterwards of Newmarket, Cambridgeshire, who married, in 1854, Francis Alexander, son of the late Right Hon. George Robert Dawson, of Castle Dawson, County Londonderry, by whom she had issue four sons and three daughters.

After marriage, and whilst residing at Bardsley, Mr. Harrop made himself useful in parochial affairs, and served the office of Churchwarden, along with his friends, the late John Grimshaw, of Audenshaw Lodge, and John Brooke, Esq., of Shepley Hall. At that time the New Poor-Law Act had not come into operation in this parish, so that the office of warden involved the due administration of the relief of the poor, in addition to the other onerous duties appertaining to it.

He also took a very active part in the erection of St. Peter's Church, Ashton, and was present at its consecration in 1824. For twenty years he occupied a pew in that church, whilst his friend, the Rev. John Hutchinson, M.A., was incumbent; and he only left it when his own new church at Bardsley had been completed, the foundation stone of which he laid with much ceremony on June 9th, 1843. In 1840, he was placed on the Commission of the Peace for Lancashire, and about the same time his name was also inserted in the Commissions for Cheshire and the West Riding of Yorkshire. In no capacity, perhaps, of a public nature, did Mr. Harrop show his superior tact and judgment more unequivocally than in presiding as chairman of a bench

of magistrates. No matter how complex the evidence might be, nor how contradictory the witnesses, he would be sure to elicit, by a pertinent question or two, all that was really essential to the perfect understanding of the merits of the case; and when that had been accomplished the decision became obvious. He also showed his great natural abilities in the arguments which he occasionally had with the counsel and attorneys that pleaded before him; for although he had only a limited knowledge of the leading cases and their principles, yet he could soon detect the weakness or fallacy of an argument, and the worthlessness of the cases cited, if they did not properly apply to the case before the court. His reprimands of prisoners, too, were masterpieces in their way—concise, forcible, and strictly to the purpose. He sometimes indulged in a little humour on the bench, but never at the expense of dignity or decorum, as nothing could possibly be further from his nature than trifling or impertinency in anything he either said or did. Perhaps there was no man in this county, in his time, whose opinion in important steps of life was more frequently asked and followed than was that of Mr. Harrop; and we may cite the great Lancashire will case of the *Earl of Sefton v. Hopwood* as an illustration of the truthfulness of this statement. The facts of that important case were stated to him before any step was taken in the matter. His advice was vigorously followed, and ended most successfully for Captain Hopwood. This is only one example out of hundreds which might be cited of the unlimited confidence generally placed in him.

In 1841, Mr. Harrop received an extensively signed requisition to allow himself to be put in nomination for the representation of Ashton-under-Lyne in Parliament in the Conservative interest. His opponent on the Liberal side was the late Charles Hindley, Esq., who had at that period represented the borough in the House of Commons for a period of six years. Mr. Harrop having consented to contest the borough, both parties made great efforts to return their favourite candidate. After a spirited contest, the numbers at the close of the second day's poll were—Mr. Harrop, 254; Mr. Hindley, 303.

In 1850, or thereabouts, Mr. Harrop was appointed a deputy-lieutenant for the county, and in that capacity he was very useful and active in swearing in the rifle volunteers, and in other respects promoting, as far as lay in his power, the volunteer movement as soon as it manifested itself in this part of the country.

In 1854, he married his second wife, Jane, youngest daughter of his friend, the late William Bentley, Esq., J.P., of Booth House, Audenshaw, by whom he left no issue. Soon after his marriage he purchased the estate at Gatton, in the County of Salop, where he spent a considerable portion of his time—both Gatton Lodge and Bardsley House being kept furnished for his accommodation. He was also the owner of Bedlwyn estate, Flintshire, which he obtained with his first wife, and of the Smithfield estate, in Little Hulton, which he purchased about twelve years before he died, and where he carried on a large coalworks in partnership with Mr. Gibson. For ten years previous to his death he attended very little personally to business connected with mining, nearly his whole time being occupied in draining and improving the Gatton estates, upon which he spent some thousands of pounds. He attached great importance to the thorough draining of the land, and he used to say that he believed agriculturists could afford to pay ten per cent. for money expended judiciously in draining. In short, all that he did evinced a remarkably large

amount of common sense, an intuitive aptitude in unravelling difficulties and perplexities, and a wonderfully clear conception of ideas, which he always expressed in the tersest and fewest words. In his own home, surrounded by his own friends, and during his whole life, no man could possibly be more hospitable and genial; and the rich fund of anecdote and information with which his mind was stored, rendered his society at all times attractive and instructive. He was from boyhood an indefatigable pedestrian, an ardent lover of the field, and one of the deadliest shots that ever carried a fowling-piece. Altogether, he was an able, upright, and remarkable man. For several years prior to his death it had been observed that his health was failing. But until within a very few months before his death he attended to his magisterial duties, though it was evident to his friends that he did so with an unusually large amount of physical exertion. About three weeks before his death Dr. Lees, who had been in regular attendance upon him, saw a combination of unfavourable circumstances manifesting themselves, which caused him to suggest that a consultation with some other medical gentlemen might be advantageous. Mr. Lund, of Manchester, was accordingly called in, and both gentlemen agreed that the case was one of a dangerous character. Loss of appetite produced general debility, and for a week before he died all hope of his restoration to health had been abandoned. Whilst in that hopeless condition he made presents of money, or what was equivalent to it, to his old and attached servants, and accompanied the presentation of his gifts by expressions of desire for their welfare, and of gratitude for the services they had rendered. In that happy state of mind he received Holy Communion, and afterwards seemed to await with patience and resignation the great change before him. For nearly forty-eight hours before his death he seemed almost unconscious of what was passing around him; but so calmly did the spirit take its flight that it was impossible to distinguish exactly the moment of separation. He died on Sunday, the 9th of September, 1866, at Bardsley House, and at the time of his death was 68 years of age. His remains were interred on Saturday, the 15th September, in the family vault at Bardsley Church, near Ashton-under-Lyne, in the presence of a large concourse of people from Ashton, Oldham, Copster Hill, Woodhouses, Waterhouses, Park Bridge, &c.

## JAMES BUTTERWORTH,

### TOPOGRAPHER, POET, AND ANTIQUARY.

BEFORE US lies a remnant consisting of two pages of MS., "Memoirs of James Butterworth, of Alt, in the parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire, written by himself." It appears that the Butterworths to whom he belonged once resided in the township of Royton, near Oldham. A member of the family migrated thence, and settled in the parish of Ashton-under-Lyne. Belonging to this branch was James Butterworth, who married a lady named Jane Ogden, of Lowside, Oldham. They were blessed with a numerous family, the youngest of their eleven children being James Butterworth, the subject of this sketch. He was born on the 28th day of August, 1771, at a place called Pitses, in the hamlet of Alt, and parish of Ashton. Alluding to his parents

he says, "They had no other means of supporting their numerous progeny than that afforded by honest industry." Though their occupation is not stated there can be little doubt but they were engaged in hand-loom weaving, then the staple trade of the district. The son further records, very much to their honour, that, whilst he was yet very young, his parents sent him to a school in the neighbourhood, taught by Mr. John Taylor, of Alt. There he learned to read and write the mother tongue, and probably a knowledge of arithmetic was also obtained, though he does not say so. Next our hero records, with pardonable pride, that occasionally the instruction of some of the flower classes was confided to him whenever the pedagogue was called out of school for a short time, in order to attend to some domestic concern or other business in the house. This confidence of the tutor fired the pupil's ambition, who, to use his own words, always strove to excel his classfellows, and, further, "to attain some share of the learning he found his master possessed of." The narrative, which was evidently written when he was a young man, abruptly ends with stating that he "began to be fond of reading, and amused himself when at home in reading most——." The rest of the sentence, if ever written, was on another page, and has been torn away. Along with the MS. is a scrap of paper, or, rather, what has once been a fly-leaf in some old book, probably a family Bible. On one side of this is inscribed—"Hannah Boyton, her book, which she bought of John Bowers for 10s. 6d. Hannah Boyton was born May 24th, 1773. J. and H. Butterworth, their book, 1792." On the other side is a family register of the births of James Butterworth's children, and also records of the deaths of some of them. The fly-leaf part alluded to is quarto size, but accompanied by another in octavo, inscribed with similar memoranda. On the obverse side, in very ornamental penmanship, with flourishes, &c., is written, "James Butterworth's book, Anno Domini 1800," one word in a line, or six lines altogether. Singularly enough neither of the registers give the date of their marriage, though the smaller-sized one shows the above Hannah Boyton becomes Mrs. Butterworth. They were blessed with a goodly array of olive branches, ten in number; and whilst their natal days are recorded, and in some instances the time of their decease, it is not stated where any of them were born, baptised, or buried. Their eldest child was honoured with the paternal name, James, but it did not survive, being born on the 19th September, 1793, and dying in the night between the 15th and 16th October in the following year. The name was afterwards conferred upon the second son (James), who was born August 24th, 1795, and lived until May 24th, 1837, when he departed this life. Hiram, the third son, was born June 14th, 1797, and, we believe, outlived the rest of the family. The next child was a daughter, who received the name of her grandmother (Jane). She was born February 19th, 1799, and died October 26th, 1809, about seven o'clock in the morning. Another daughter followed whom they named Betty. She was born March 12th, 1802, and died January 7th, 1818, in her sixteenth year. The sixth child was a son, named Alfred, born February 5th, 1814, and died on the morning of the 30th April ensuing. Their next two children were each, in turn, named Mary. The first was born May 11th, 1805, about eight o'clock in the evening, and died the following year, on the 17th of June, about eleven o'clock that night; the second was born September 8th, 1807, about half-past four in the morning, and died on the anniversary of Gunpowder Plot, 1809, at the same hour of the evening. A few weeks later than

the last date (December 4th), they had yet another daughter born, about a quarter past four in the morning. It seems they had a partiality for the names of Jane and Mary, and, either from thinking they might not have another opportunity of handing them down, or supposing the fatality of an early death to a child called after a deceased brother or sister would be avoided if they imparted a new name by doubling the two, they baptized her Jane Mary. She died the following year; but at what time is not stated. Lastly, the youngest and most famous child of the worthy couple (Edwin) was born at Pitses, on the first of October, 1812, about half-past two in the morning. He became the author of divers local histories, and also rendered very considerable assistance to Mr. Baines in the compilation of his "History of Lancashire."

Leaving these family matters, and turning to the father of James Butterworth, it appears that he first tried hand-loom weaving, a very lucrative occupation in those days. Then he became what he first aspired to—a country schoolmaster. One of his scholars afterwards attained to eminence as a millionaire, in the person of Edmund Buckley, Esq., of Ivy House, Ardwick, and Gorton Head, Saddleworth, for some time M.P. for Newcastle. We have heard him speak with reverence of the memory of his quondam schoolmaster.

James Butterworth was one of the first Sunday School Teachers in Oldham, for when, in 1799, James Lees, Esq., of Walshaw House, established a Sunday School at "Robin House," Mumps, it was placed under Mr. Butterworth's superintendence. It seems that when a young man he began to write poetry, and some of his early lucubrations have been entered—nay, from their many corrections and alterations, we might say composed—in his common-place book, a fragment only of which is in existence. The poems seem to have been cut out, improved upon, or finished, and then printed. The first of those remaining is a short composition of ten lines on a "Thunder-storm in the Morning." Next comes the draft of an epitaph, which seems to have been inspired by his daily occupation. It runs thus—

The shuttle in the weaver's loom  
With speed doth fly away,  
So quickly fly we to our doom,  
Each Bacchanalian gay—  
The youthful and the gray.

A little further on occurs another epitaph, suggested by the symbol of frailty, the "chirping weft, which would ever be present to his gaze whilst engaged plying the songstress," as he fancifully terms the shuttle in the preface to one of his works:

The thread that from the shuttle runs  
Doth unexpected break;  
O, think on this! ye mortal sons,  
How soon Death may you take.

Two other epitaphs also express his sentiments with respect to the uncertainty of life, a theme that would often be brought vividly before his notice, in the deaths of the several members of his short-lived family. One of them, relating to his first-born, runs in this wise—

To realms of everlasting light,  
My little flow'et took his flight;  
While sleep had sealed our eyes,  
Th' unspotted spirit flew  
Exalting to the skies.  
But in that place where rest the souls of upright men,  
With longing arms, I hope to press my child again.



The other, on the same subject, but which may have been occasioned by the untimely removal of another member of his family, is a couplet, and is thus expressed—

To realms of bliss, to regions of eternal day,  
My little op'ning bud is flown away.

About a dozen lines occur of his "Rocher Vale," which, with other metrical sketches, he subsequently published. Next, there has been a prose composition signed, "Jas. Butterworth," and dated "Nov. 28th, *Anno Christi* 1794, Pitses, near Lees." He had also composed a poem of the somewhat pretentious title of "Prophecies, Types, and Figures of Christ, contained in the New Testament." What the merits of this disquisition may have been is impossible now to say, as only the preface, containing twenty-three lines, now remains. There is also a draft, or copy of a brief, written, probably, to the editor of one of the Manchester papers of the day—or, rather, of the "week." It is couched in the following words:—"By inserting the following song, written by a youth in the country, you'll oblige, A Reader and Purchaser. Pitses, near Lees, May 4th, 1795." Whether our friend, "the young man from the country," was gratified by seeing his composition in print or not, we cannot say, but probably a reference to *Wheeler's Manchester Chronicle*, preserved in the Chetham Library, for that date might determine. In the commonplace book only three of the verses are left, a fourth having apparently been torn away. As a specimen of his early poetic talents, we venture to transcribe them:—

THE SHEPHERD'S SONG TO MAY.

Hail! sweet nymph of dear delight,  
Loosely clad in mantle green;  
Hail! sweet goddess, ever bright,  
Love and laughter—morning queen.  
Round my cell thy frolics play,  
Thro' the broken lattice peep;  
Greet me at the blush of day  
With the bleating of the sheep.  
Smiling o'er the hills arise!  
As I leave my rushy bed;  
While softly soaring up the skies,  
The merry lark sings o'er my head.

There is still another piece, and the most imposing in length, extending to thirteen pages, and the highest sounding in title, namely—"The Fall of Marat, a Tragedy in three acts." Persons represented are—Horatio, Cordet's husband; Marat, tyrant of France; Mm. Cordet; Drusilla, Cordet's sister; guards, post-boy, &c. Scene: Paris and adjacent country. It is a prose composition, and wanting a conclusion, which has evidently been cut away.

So far as we can ascertain, his first literary adventure in the publishing line was "An Historical and Descriptive Account of the Town and Parochial Chapelry of Oldham, in the County of Lancaster." The chapelry includes the townships of Oldham, Crompton, and Royton. This work was dedicated to Sir Joseph Radcliffe, Bart., and dated April, 1817, from the Post Office, Oldham, he being at that period post-master of the town.

Next we find him wooing the muses, for in the ensuing year (1818) he issued "The Rustic Muse: A Collection of Poems, by J. Butterworth," which is now a scarce book. Indeed, most of his works are now difficult to meet with. One other poetical work he published, namely, "Mancunium, a Poem,"

but at what period we know not, although a copy figures in the catalogue of the Butterworth Library, Oldham Lyceum. After the lapse of four years he gave to the world "The Antiquities of the Town, and a Complete History of the Trade of Manchester, with a description of Manchester and Salford, to which is added an account of the Improvements in the town, &c. Manchester: Printed for the author by C. W. Leake, St. Mary's Gate, 1822." It bears a triple dedication, namely, the antiquities of the two towns, dated May 6th, 1822, to William Yates, Esq., of Newton Street, Manchester. "The History of the Trade of Manchester," dated July 25th, is inscribed to William Townsend, Esq., of Market Street, Manchester. The descriptive portion, dated September 20th (like the others from Coldhurst, near Oldham), is dedicated to J. W. Hulme, Esq., of Medlock Vale, in the parish of Ashton-under-Lyne. In the preface, which is also dated May 6th, 1822, he says, "Whatever the author has acquired in literary matter is almost exclusively his own, except what small portion which might be supposed to fall to the lot of a poor cottager educated in an obscure school, in a still more obscure part of the country, by a meritorious, though unpolished, countryman." He states, also, that he had been accustomed to the cotton trade, and, therefore, the information he gives is the more reliable. The descriptive or business portion of the work is a literary curiosity. Where a tradesman patronised or fed him, the author sang sweetly, and either gave a glowing account of his business in prose, or may be favoured him with an eulogistic doggerel manufactured for the occasion. In the following year, 1823, he (Mr. Butterworth) sent forth his "History and Description of the Town of Ashton-under-Lyne, in the County of Lancaster; the Village of Dukinfield, in the County of Chester. Ashton: Printed by Thomas Cunningham." The preface is dated November, 1823, and, after a dozen lines of poetry illustrative of history in general, he says—"An history of the place of my nativity, and a description of the scenes of my early days, is the design of my present undertaking, while a wish for a recurrence of those pleasing hours, and an attachment to the place itself, have been the chief inducements for prosecuting the present work, in which I have endeavoured, from ancient MSS., to trace the antiquities of the town and parish, and an historical account from that early and interesting period to the present time." The division of Ashton-under-Lyne is dated from Coldhurst, near Oldham, 1823, and inscribed to the Right Hon. Lord Suffield, as representative of the ancient family of the Asshetons. The Knott Lanes division is inscribed August 29th, 1822, to Jonah Harrop, Esq., as representative of the ancient family of the Bardsleys, of Bardsley. The Audenshaw division is dated April 10th, 1823, and inscribed to John Lowe, Esq., of Shepley Hall. The Hartshead division is dedicated on the same date to Samuel Ashton, Esq., of Pole Bank, Werneth, in the Parish of Stockport. The Dukinfield portion is dated 1823, and is dedicated to Francis Dukinfield Astley, Esq. After a few years of apparent rest in the literary line, Mr. Butterworth brought out, in 1826, a second edition of his "History of the Chapelry of Oldham." In the following year (1827) he published what was termed his "History of the Four Parishes," or, as he gives it, "History and Description of the Towns and Parishes of Stockport, Ashton-under-Lyne, Mottram-in-Longdendale, and Glossop, with some Memorials of the late F. D. Astley, Esq., of Dukinfield, and extracts from his poems, with an Elegy to his memory, by James Butterworth. Manchester: Printed by W. D. Davy, St. Ann's Square, 1827."

His son, Edwin Butterworth, in the appendix to his "Statistical Sketches of Lancashire," sets down as being issued, in 1827-8, a second edition of his (James Butterworth's) history of the town and Parish of Ashton-under-Lyne. As we have never yet met with it as a separate work, we suspect it is the Ashton portion of his history of the four parishes previously alluded to. Next we find him boldly venturing on a work issued in parts, entitled "A History and Description of the Parochial Chapelry of Saddleworth, in the County of York, by James Butterworth. Manchester: Printed by W. D. Varey, 3, Red Lion Street, St. Ann's Square, 1828." It was dedicated to the Rev. F. R. Raines, assistant Curate of Saddleworth (the late Canon Raines, the great Lancashire antiquary), and to the Rev. William Winter, Incumbent of Hey Chapel and of St. Peter's, Oldham, and dated December 15th, 1828, from Busk, near Oldham. Simultaneously he also published, in parts, "An Historical and Topographical Account of the Town and Parish of Rochdale." Dedication dated September 12th, 1828; and, like the "History of Saddleworth" (sparsely) "embellished with engravings" of no great pretensions to art. The following year Mr. James Butterworth issued his "Chronology of Manchester," a copy of which reposes in the Manchester Free Library. It seems to have been subsequently improved and expanded by his son, Edwin; then by Mr. C. H. Timperley, in 1839, as his "Annals of Manchester;" next by John Leigh, as the "Manchester Historical Recorder," and since continued by Edwin Waugh and T. Fawcett. For the last nine years of his life we are unable to trace any further productions of his active pen, and can only suppose that he ceased to put anything forth in his own name, but, probably, still continued to do a little in local history, &c., for the use of his son, Edwin, who rose into considerable repute as a local historian.

Like Mr. Whitaker, the Manchester historian, James Butterworth seems to have been over credulous, or disposed to accept information without much inquiry as to the probability of its being authentic. To some extent the fault lay in the times in which they lived. They had few or no predecessors, and local history and topographical writings had not been subjected to such vigorous criticisms as they are now. Since that day great advances have been made in this particular, as in every other study. Patient research and diligent investigation have been cheerfully undertaken. Rich archæological treasures have everywhere been brought to light and appreciated, and the discoveries still go on. The late Dr. Whitaker was one of the earliest in the field, and did immense service to the "cause," and so did the late Mr. Harland. The Butterworths (father and son) contributed a fair share to the history of South-East Lancashire. Finally, we may remark, James Butterworth's style was diffuse and discursive, whilst his son's was equally as terse and sometimes meagre. The first delighted in hearsay and tradition; the latter in records and statistics. It only remains to note that our author (James Butterworth) died November 23rd, 1837, aged sixty-six years, and was most probably interred at Oldham Old Church.

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## WHICH IS THE OLDEST FAMILY IN ASHTON PARISH ?

UNDER this heading, John Higson has left behind him a very interesting *resumé* of the Ashton Rent Roll, from which he conjectures, that it is most probable, that many of the persons still bearing names identical in spelling with those which appear in that old document, or corruptions or abbreviations of the same, are the lineal descendants of the tenants of Sir Robert Assheton in the fifteenth century. The manner in which the writer has manipulated this old MS. is not only ingenious but highly instructive. We, therefore, give it in full.

"The question has frequently been asked, 'Which is the oldest family in Ashton Parish?' To this interesting query there is little chance of giving either a positive or satisfactory reply. The only existing means of even approximating to certainty is from consulting and comparing ancient evidences. But families may and doubtless have lived for generations in the parish without having once owned a foot of land, or a yard of timber or brick-work. Consequently they have no title deeds to appeal to, and virtually cannot trust any ancestry beyond the three or four latest descents. Happily for the genealogist, the lord of Ashton caused a rental of his estates to be taken in 1422, the same year as the Collegiation of Manchester Parish Church, and just a century later than a celebrated survey of that manor. Unfortunately, however, in the copy of the Ashton Rent Roll, inserted in James Butterworth's History of the Parish, there exist many palpable errors. Part of the document appears to have been written in Latin and part in English, or otherwise a partial translation has been attempted. In most old documents, Domesday not excepted, there was considerable mutilation and excruciation of names, both personal and local. The MSS. were often left carelessly written, and perhaps in many cases the scribes and compilers gathered the appellations orally at a time when the orthographical standard was at a low and indefinite pitch.

"The Ashton Roll contains a copious list of tenants' names, many of whose representatives, apparently from existing personal nomenclature, still linger in the vicinity of their ancient abodes. From this valuable record it is evident that at that remote period the current Christian names were mostly of simple form and few in number. Sometimes the proper Christian name of an individual appears in one part of the document, its Latin or Norman French form in another, and its diminutive or nick-name in a third place. John was the most common appellative, occurring more than twenty times, whilst its diminutive Jack and Jak are frequent, and Jenkin (perhaps little John) and Johnes, Johannes, &c. (Latin), are abundant. Robert, Robyn, and Robin are recorded several times each, as are also Robto, Roberto, and Robertus. Thomas happens nearly a dozen times, and Thomlyn and Tomlin, its diminutives, twice or thrice each. Richard uses a dozen enumerations, and its abbreviations Dycon and Diccon, also appear several times; whilst Ricus and Richardus are recorded. William, too, seems to have been a favourite name, coming no less than sixteen times, besides Wilkyn, its derivative, Willi, its abbreviated Latinised form. Roger boasts eight, and Hobbe, its kindred nick-name, a couple of notices. There are also mentioned, though less frequently, Roufe and Rauf, Roulin and Runlyns (synonymous

with Rowland and Roland, and the prefix in the present surname of Rawlinson), George, Hugh, Christopher, Thurstan, and Patrick. Atkin and Peryn, these Christian names are now-a-days used only as surnames. Piers and Petrus represent the modern Peter, as Nichol and Nichus do Nicholas; and Henrici, Carol, Adæ, and Raduphe—Henry, Charles, Adam, and Randolph.

"Of ladies' names the most common was Margaret, excepting Marget and Magot twice, and Mergret and Mergot once each, as representing it. Syssott is named five, Alys and Elyn three, and Nan, Nanne, Malkyn, and Jone once apiece. Three females assume their surnames from, or are described by the place of their abode; one is noted as a mother, three as wives, and thirteen as widows. One young damsel is pre-eminently distinguished by the poetical cognomen of "Ellen the Rose," probably the beauty of the parish of Ashton at that period.

"The recorded surnames of Ashton females are Atkynson, Bardsley, Cook, Cropper, Hadfield, Hanson, Hind, Hulme, Hoggeson, Hollinworth, Jackson, Kyngé, Patrick, Peryn, Pole, Rose, Stavely or Stealey, Tumson, Unton, Wilkyn, Wilson, and Windebank.

"The male surnames comprise five forms of derivation, the first of which are deducted from the father's Christian name, as Adamson, Aitkinson and Atkinson, Diconson, Higson, Hoggeson, Jackson, Jameson, Jenkinson, Johnson, Richardson, Robyson and Robinson, Saunderson and Sanderson, Thomson, Toneson [? Tomson], Wilkinson, Willison, and Wilson. The second class is limited, consisting of a few appellations miscellaneously derived, as Burdetan or Busdytan, Dane, Ffulstaffe, Margree [? Mac Gree, an Hibernian designation], Somaystee or Somastee, Spakeman, Tyrre, and Unton. The class embraces such as have inserted between the Christian name and surname the French *le*, or English equivalent *the*, which always indicates some office or occupation.

"This division yields an interesting insight into Ashton modes of employment more than four centuries ago. Amongst the artisans a requisite personage would be William the Arrowsmith, who might supply the neighbouring villages with those then requisite instruments. Richard and Roger the Smiths, and Robert the Wright, would also be found useful in their generation. Singularly enough, whilst no Thatchers are named, there are two Slaters recorded, John and William. Ashton then supported a Miller, who held two corn mills, two Baxters [Bakers], Roger and Henry; nor was the culinary art monopolised, for the rental names John, William, and Thomas the Cooks. William the Cocker was probably a messenger. Proofs of the prevalence of the woollen manufacture in the parish are afforded by the surnames of Roger, Robert, Thomlyn, and Jenkin the Croppers; as also by William and Robert the Walkers, *i.e.* the Fullers. Jak the Spencer (we are not sure of the derivation of Spencer, and therefore hazard no conjecture) was the bailey, which is still the vulgar contraction of bailiff. The only shop-keeper specifically is John the Mercer. An appropriate name seems Tomlyn, *i.e.* little Tomason Tom, the Tailor, perhaps commemorating some dapper little stitcher of that day. Of the lowest type were a couple of husbandmen, John the Hind, and his son Jack. Even then Ashtonians had their recreations, as appears from the name of Richard le Hunt, *i.e.* Richard the Huntsman, and probably from Hobbe and Robert the Kings, as also from the stated contributions to the gyst ales and yule feast. John and Richard the Byrons lived at Clayton Hall, in the neighbouring township of Droylsden.

"The fourth division of surnames includes such only of those bearing the name of a locality as have the Norman French *del*, or the English synonym *of the* prefixed to the surname. The *del*, contracted from *de la*, is the generic name of some natural or artificial place where the person named resided, consequently all these persons were resident in Ashton parish. Four centuries have rendered obsolete some of these local designations, yet most of them remain to this day. This section of names comprises Aspenhalgh (now written Aspinall) Cross, Edge, Hegrod (now Heyrod), Holde, Hyrst or Hurst, Knowles, Leghs (now Lees), Rasbotham, Winterbotham Wode or Wood, and Woodfield.

"The last division consists of territorial surnames, having the Norman French *de*, or as Anglicised of, prefixed to the name of some town, locality, or hamlet whence the family originally sprung, or were then seated. A portion only, perhaps one third, of these personages resided in Ashton parish, the rest merely holding land therein, and this accounts for their inclusion in the roll. Their names are as follows:—Assheton, Ainsworth, Aldwinshaw, Bardesley, Belfield, Bulkeley, and Buckley, Chadwick, Claydon, Clogehead (Clough-head), Cowleshaw, Curtall, Gatecliffe, Hadfield, Haworth, Hough (Haigh or Hough), Hollingworth, Lawton, Lusley, Lyme, Lyngards, Meltham, Mosley, Moston, Shepley, Staveley, Stealey or Stayley, Tetlow, Trafford, Vernon, Whiteleigh and Worsley.

"On recapitulating the foregoing several classes of surnames, the respective numbers are about 17 sons, 8 promiscuous, 15 *Les*, 12 *dels*, and 30 *des*, forming an aggregate of 82 appellations. After deducting some dozen for non-residents, there remain 70 family names rescued from oblivion by this rental. Many of these names are still existing in the locality, and probably borne by the lineal descendants of the above tenants."

## ROBERT WALKER.

### "TIM BOBBIN THE SECOND."

ROBERT WALKER was born in 1728, at Carrington Barn, a farm house not far from Red Hall, in the southerly portion of Audenshaw. The whole family held strong Jacobinical opinions. In personal appearance he was well proportioned, and stood 5 feet 7½ inches in height. He followed the occupation of hand-loom weaving, in addition to attending to his small farm. He was in the habit of meeting the people in the surrounding district on stated occasions, for the purpose of conferring on matters of weaving; and many an excellent trade harangue was delivered by him to the hand-loom weavers, when assembled, as they were wont to do, on Ashton Moss. His chief fame or notoriety arose from his political opinions, and from a pamphlet which was written under his name, of which the MS. is said to have been sold for £15. It was originally inserted in successive numbers of *Cowdroy's Manchester Gazette* (first published in 1795). It was afterwards printed in pamphlet form, when a copy found its way into every free-thinking, reforming, or Jacobinical family in the neighbourhood. At the present time scarcely an entire copy is extant; its title—we quote from a mutilated fragment—was, "Plebian Politics, or principles and practices of certain Mole-eyed Maniacs, vulgarly called Warrites. By way of a dialogue between two Lancashire Clowns. Together with several fugitive pieces by Tim Bobbin the Second. Dedicated to the

tenants of the Styne in general, and to the Swine of Lancashire in particular. Dec. 24, 1801." The principal piece is a "Dialogue between Pig and Tum Grunt." It is written in the vernacular of the district, and after comparison with Collier, Bamford, Waugh, and other Lancashire writers, we consider it as decidedly the best exposition extant of the patois of this locality. The pamphlet we quote from, though without date, yet, from being uniform and bound up with an edition of Collier's works, published in Salford in 1813, we believe was the second edition, and we infer from "A Dialogue between Sam Sly and the Author," that the first impression numbered no less than 1,500 copies. Robert Walker was interred at Ashton Parish Church, in May, 1803, his death being chronicled in the *Manchester Mercury and Harrop's General Advertiser*, "Died on the 6th instant, at Little-Moss, near Ashton, Lancashire, age 75, Mr. Robert Walker, well known by the appellation of 'Tim Bobbin the Second.'" "His wife," says Higson, "died before him, and they had two sons and one daughter. Esther, who carried on the farm, where she died unmarried, and was buried at Ashton on the day of Jubilee, October 25th, 1809. One of the sons, Peter, hung himself in the barn adjoining his father's dwelling. Joseph, the other son, was an intellectual man. He became Master of the School, at School Hill, Cheadle Heath, Cheshire, where he taught mathematics, and the higher branches of learning; he was in this district before the year 1780, then he is lost sight of for some time, until shortly before 1817, when he went to America, and since that time he has not been heard of. It is supposed that he either wrote or revised the work ascribed to his father; and the reason alleged why he did not take the honour of writing the brochure is said to have been because Cheadle, possessing an old Parish Church and being inhabited by Church and King folk, he was afraid it might prove detrimental to his interests, and therefore his father wore the honour in Little-moss, which was a far less loyal locality than Cheadle."

It appears that John Higson has fallen into an error respecting the family left by Robert Walker, as will be seen from the following letter, dated May 29, 1855, and addressed by Robert S. Andrew, to the Editor of the *Ashton Reporter*, in reply to the letter, from which we have taken the above quotation. It is to the following effect:—"I casually came across a grandson of Robert Walker. His name is James Walker, and he is upwards of 70 years of age. He says that he knew his grandfather well, and that to his certain knowledge he was a quiet, peaceable man—a perfect specimen of a Lancashire man dwelling in troubled times. He was an intimate friend of Montgomery, the author of 'The World before the Flood,' and who was imprisoned for libelling a parson. Your correspondent [referring to Higson's letter] falls into an error regarding Robert Walker's family. He says he had two sons and one daughter. I think he will be glad to be corrected. Instead of three he had thirteen, namely, Ann, Mary, Esther, Joseph, James, Charles, Leah, Rachel, Robert, Philip, Peter, Phœbe, and Daniel. Joseph was the scholar mentioned by your correspondent; but he was more metaphysical than witty. He neither did, nor could write a piece like the dialogue between 'Whistle-pig and Tom Grunt.' He rather inclined to mathematical studies; and it is, therefore, the wish and desire of the grandson of Robert Walker to place his relative's name in its deserved position. He was a kind and beloved neighbour; not a fierce partisan, but still eminently anxious for reform. He was a man consulted at all times, and his advice was esteemed. He lived

when political waters were disturbed, and his cognomen of 'Tim Bobbin the Second,' has earned for him a foremost name among the local champions of freedom. In closing, I may just remark that he was uncle to the venerable reformer, Charles Walker, of Audenshaw, the coadjutor and friend of Bamford and Nicholson, of Lees, and whose remains were borne to the grave in St. Peter's Church-yard in February, 1851, by a large number of friends, who will ever hold his memory in the highest estimation."

It is needless to say the old man also died much respected, and had the esteem of all the reforming politicians of the district.

## AN OLD RENT ROLL.

"A Half Year's Rent Roll for Dukinfield," copied from a parchment said to be in the handwriting of Nathaniel Gee, Schoolmaster in the village, and Collector for the Estate.

MIDSUMMER, 1717.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Abram Ogden .....	1	5	9	Mary Gee .....	0	1	3
James Wyld for Taylors .....	0	11	8	Jonathan Jakes.....	0	1	0
Charles Thorniley .....	0	1	8	Ann Harrop.....	0	1	10
Daniel Hurst, Senr. ....	0	7	6	John Harrop.....	0	1	0
Daniel Hurst, Junr. ....	0	7	6	Thos. Harrop.....	0	0	6
Elizabeth Royle .....	0	19	7	Nathan Bruckshaw.....	0	2	6
Edward Cooke .....	0	1	6	Richard Stansfield and James ...	0	15	0
Ellen Bardsley.....	0	13	10½	Robert Stansfield.....	0	7	6
Ellen Leigh and Samuel .....	0	16	2½	Robert Franks .....	0	0	8
George Booth .....	0	13	6	Samuel Higham .....	0	2	3
Henry Cooke .....	1	2	1½	Simeon Andrew .....	0	2	11½
James Grime .....	0	18	10	Robert Robinson.....	0	10	3
James Harrop .....	0	1	8	Thos. Beswick .....	0	1	3
James Beswick.....	0	1	0	Wm. Fidlow.....	0	12	3
James Wyld.....	1	5	3½	Wm. Crabtree .....	0	19	11½
John Stansfield.....	0	1	5	Wm. Garside .....	0	10	0
Jane Bold .....	0	6	10	Wm. Nicholson .....	0	3	4
Mr. John Cooper.....	0	10	0	Mrs. Judith Dukinfield .....	0	10	7
John Scorer .....	0	18	1½				
John Chadwick .....	0	18	5½		29	13	1½
John Harrop, Coachman .....	0	2	3½				
John Bardsley .....	0	13	10½	John Wagstaffe .....	0	9	9
John Woolley .....	1	10	0	John Clough .....	0	7	8
John Booth .....	1	10	1½	Daniel Bardsley .....	0	4	0
John Lyne.....	0	13	2	Widow Lilly, chief due at Mar-			
John Butterworth .....	0	11	9	tlemas.....	0	0	4
John Newton .....	1	0	1½				
John Bruckshaw .....	0	19	3				
John Buckley .....	0	17	10½				
John Cheetham .....	0	15	3				
John Kelsall .....	0	11	1				
John Platt.....	0	15	7½				
Joshua Cheetham .....	1	4	9				
Joseph Burgesse .....	1	4	1½				
Mary Hyde, vid. ....	0	16	1				
Matthew Pemberton .....	0	1	0				

Mem.—Daniel Bardsley's year's rent for 1717, paid to Mr. Robt. the day after I received the same.



## AN OBSOLETE CUSTOM.

In a small work on "Some Obsolete Peculiarities of English Law," by William Beamont, Esq., we have an interesting description of the demonstration made by Mr. Dukinfield Astley in 1807, when he entered Chester as High Sheriff. We insert the account, because it is of local interest. It is to the following effect:—"In the year 1807, when Mr. Dukinfield Astley served the office of High Sheriff of Cheshire, and came, as usual, to conduct the Judges into the city, he made his entrance into Chester in much state. Colonel Hanson's corps of Manchester Volunteer Rifles in uniforms of green and silver, with their band playing military airs, lined the streets. Between their ranks first came a number of the High Sheriff's friends, either mounted on horseback, or in showy equipages. To these succeeded his mounted tenantry, in looped hats and frocks of green and gold, such as might have been worn by Robin Hood and his greenwood followers, and with javelins of antique shape. The tenantry were headed by six trumpeters in gay uniforms, with clarions from which depended silken banners embroidered and richly blazoned with the Sheriff's arms and ancestral honours, and the music of which clarions regulated the march of the procession. Next to the tenantry, in apparel meant for speed, like Malise in the 'Lady of the Lake,' of whom it was said

The dun deer's hide  
On fleeter foot was never tied,

came the High Sheriff's running footman, in a dress of the olden time, fantastic and picturesque. He had on a silk vest of light blue, white sleeves, a white kilt fashioned like a Highlander's, and pumps with rosettes. From the top of the crimson velvet skull cap which covered his head, threads of silver lace fell in a circle round the crown, and he carried in his hand a white wand, the badge of his office. We must go back for the origin of these running footmen to those Jewish times when fifty of them ran before the chariot of Adonijah and of Absalom, and it was from some of their successors that Jeremiah drew his allusion—"If thou hast run with the footmen and they have wearied thee, then how wilt thou contend with horses?"—(12, 5.) Their representative, the Egyptian *sais*, runs before his master at the present day, and it is evident that they were formerly common in England. Sir John English, addressing one of them, in 'The Country Lasses,' says, 'How now pumps, dimity, and sixty miles a day, whose greyhound are you?' And to another he says, 'Stand still, you lousy seven miles an hour rascal, you round-about knave, you skip ditch.' Immediately after this antiquated officer, seated in a splendid chariot, appeared the High Sheriff and his chaplain, the latter in his clerical robes, and the former in full dress with cocked hat and sword, the hilt of which was of cut steel, and sparkled brighter than silver. The High Sheriff was not the uncouth squire who, going to escort Judge Buller on a similar occasion, and being at a loss for a topic of conversation, asked his lordship whether he had gone to see the great elephant at last assize town: 'Why, no,' said the judge, 'for we both entered at the same time, and it was a point of ceremony which should make the first call.' The Sheriff's chariot was drawn by six beautiful chesnut horses, caparisoned with richly-mounted harness, the two leaders guided by a youthful postilion in a cap and rich livery, and the others driven four-in-hand by a portly coachman in powdered wig, three-cornered hat and full state dress. A bevy of

lacqueys in gay liveries attended the Sheriff's carriage, and were followed by a stud of led horses, with holsters and gay saddles, and caparisoned in a variety of rich and fanciful housings, some of which were of polished leather, with plated ornaments, some of leopard's skin, and others of cloth or velvet, each of a different colour—crimson, green, and gold. Several of the horses were beautiful animals, and all of them had their own grooms, in picturesque dresses, walking at their head. Some of the grooms could with difficulty restrain their prancing steeds. The rear of the cavalcade was brought up and closed by a long array of the Sheriff's official servants, the bailiffs of the county, mounted on horseback, and dressed in scarlet uniforms and black caps."

### THOMAS PITT.

AMONG the factory workers few men were more respected than Thomas Pitt. He was born at Astley, in Lancashire and was brought up to handloom weaving. When about 31 years of age he came to reside at Newton Moor, and obtained employment at Mr. Ashton's cotton mills, as a cotton yarn dresser. In an account of the short time movement, written by himself, there are several interesting statements bearing on the part he and others took in obtaining that boon:—"I soon found that the great number of hours the operatives had to be confined to the machine, and breathing an impure atmosphere, day by day, was such as to prove destructive to health, and precluded the possibility of improving the mind to any extent. Under this impression I joined some good men, who were then struggling to get the hours of labour reduced. I continued to do so quietly until I came to Dukinfield, when I was solicited to become a member of the Short-time Committee in Ashton. After Mr. Charles Hindley's election, a deputation was sent to him to ascertain if he would take charge of a Ten Hours Factory Bill, and present it to Parliament. That deputation consisted of myself and the late Thomas Forbes, both of us working for him at the time. He received us in the most cordial manner, as was usual with him, but requested time to consider until six o'clock in the evening, when he would give the committee an answer. He did so, and took charge of the Ten Hours Bill. When Parliament met, the committee was anxious that a delegate should be sent to London; so was Mr. Hindley; but who to send became a difficult question. At length the Rev. J. R. Stephens was proposed. I strongly objected to him, feeling that we ought to select an operative, whose practical knowledge would tell more weightily with members than any amount of theory, however classical the language by which his arguments might be enforced. This view of the case was at once assented to, and I was requested to go myself. I absolutely refused to do so, but have lamented ever since that I did not accept the appointment, as I feel fully persuaded that many evils which originated in the choice made would have been prevented. Mr. Hindley got a bill drawn up, which proposed to reduce the hours of labour upon a graduated scale, viz., half-an-hour per day each year, until we arrived at ten hours. This bill was submitted to the delegates then assembled in London, but it was objected to, although 170 manufacturers in Yorkshire pledged themselves to support it. This was a great error, and threw the good cause back many years. In 1833 Mr. Brotherton, the member of Parliament for Salford, had every chance of obtaining an

Eleven Hours Factory Act. This bill was prepared, and the Government of that day would not have opposed it; of this I was repeatedly assured by the honourable member himself. He submitted his plan to the Short-time Committees in the manufacturing districts, coupling his information with his strong attachment to ten hours, but showing the moral impossibility of obtaining a measure of that nature. He urged upon us to take Eleven hours rather than nothing. Unfortunately his proposition was rejected, and strange to say, he was denounced as a traitor ever afterwards, which led him to be very cautious in receiving deputations of working-men. For twelve months after Mr. Hindley's election, I met the committee twice every week, at Mr. Grundy's, the Spread Eagle, Ashton-under-Lyne. This I did after working till near eight o'clock in the evening in a hot dressing-room, and stayed till twelve or one o'clock in the morning. For six months longer, we met once a week. These meetings I attended at my own expense; no one finding me a single penny. Although this great question was kept before the public little was done until 1844, when Lord Ashley moved and carried a resolution, 'That all young persons and women should leave work at six o'clock in the evening, beginning at six in the morning.' Sir Robert Peel's Government was alarmed at this, and mustered their friends on the following evening and rescinded it. In 1846 the matter was again introduced into Parliament by Lord Ashley. It so happened that I was chosen to go to London by the Ashton Short-time Committee, Mr. Hindley bearing my expenses. Not a single operative with all their professed anxiety for the Ten Hours Bill ever paid one farthing; indeed, it was said that I was bribed by him to advocate an Eleven Hours Bill. I wish here to record, in justice to the character of Mr. Hindley, that he never, under any circumstances, strove to influence me beyond my convictions; so far from that, he earnestly sought my advice, as an operative, as to the views of working-men upon the subject; and I defy any man living to prove that there were not thousands of workers in favour of getting a bill for eleven hours. I, therefore, took a part in endeavouring to obtain it, my practical knowledge leading me irresistibly to the conclusion that the physical health, moral, religious, and intellectual cultivation of the masses could never progress with the long hour system."

The papers from which the above extracts are taken were left in an unfinished state. Through the kindness, however, of some of our friends, we are enabled to give some further facts as to his energy and perseverance in carrying out the cause which was ever dear to his heart—the reformation of the factory system. With regard to the factory legislation, we find that the first Sir Robert Peel introduced a measure in 1802, but this had reference to apprentices only. In 1819 he brought in a bill which reduced the working hours for all between nine and sixteen years of age, to twelve hours a day. In 1825 another bill was introduced which enacted penalties for over-working, and reduced the hours of labour on Saturday from twelve to nine, and it was about this time that Mr. Pitt began to take an active part in obtaining a reduction of the hours of labour in mills. He was deputed to London on eight different occasions, and as the result of his exertions, and those who who worked with him, we find that the bill passed in 1831 prohibited night work for all under 21 years of age, which was the stepping-stone towards abolishing it altogether. In 1833 another measure was introduced, which reduced the working hours for all under 13 years of age to eight hours per

day, and gave two hours schooling. This act was also made applicable to woollen and flax mills. 1844 saw another bill before Parliament, which prevented all under 13 from working more than six hours per day, and gave further schooling clauses. It also enforced boxing off machinery, and prohibited all females from being worked longer than twelve hours a day. In 1847 another advance was made in the reformation of the factory system. The active secretary of the Manchester Short-time Committee bears excellent testimony to the continued activity of Pitt, and says he saved them much trouble and expense. In truth, he adds, "We have too much reason to fear that a too close attention to seeing that the act was fully carried out during the winter of 1857-8, laid the foundation of the disease which brought him to the grave." Thinking to recruit his shattered health, he went to reside at Astley, his native place; but he continued to grow worse, until death relieved him of his sufferings on the 16th of July, 1858, in the 66th year of age. He was interred on Tuesday, July 20th, in the Old Chapel-yard, Dukinfield. Like most public men he was at times unfairly judged, which led to observations which gave him much anguish of mind. During the Chartist agitation he was taken into custody, and after being confined for a short period, was liberated, his only offence being that of advising the people at a meeting on Hall Green, Dukinfield, to "maintain the law and act peaceably." As a testimony to his public and private worth, he was presented by the operatives on the 7th of February, 1857, with a sum of £60, on which occasion Mr. Hindley paid him the highest compliment, and said he "looked upon him as a man, whose every thought and act were characterised by caution and good sense."

### WILLIAM BURNLEY.

THE subject of this sketch was a native of Hightown, Yorkshire, and was born in the year 1816. At that place he served his apprenticeship as a currier. During the period of his apprenticeship he formed the acquaintance of a fellow-workman named Willy, who afterwards commenced business in Stalybridge. About the year 1837 Mr. Willy secured the services of Mr. Burnley as a journeyman, who, subsequently, became foreman to Mr. Tordiff, and afterwards succeeded to his business. During his leisure hours he devoted himself to the acquisition of knowledge and the cultivation of his mind. He was passionately fond of instrumental music, and found time to make himself a tolerably proficient musician. He was one of the most active members and staunchest supporters of the Stalybridge Harmonic Society. He possessed fair literary attainments, and is the author of many occasional pieces of poetry. His best literary efforts were those in which he sought to illustrate some local event in satirical verse. Many effusions from his pen have appeared in the columns of the *Ashton Reporter* at different times. For upwards of thirty years he was an active member of the Stalybridge District of the Order of Oddfellows, Manchester Unity. When the Commercial Lodge was opened, he was appointed the first presiding officer. For upwards of thirty-three years he was a member of the Stalybridge Mechanics' Institution. He was also one of the pioneers of a praiseworthy movement intended to carry out the education of working men, especially of skilled artisans. When by-standers were not too enthusiastic concerning the march of intellect

among the working classes, he was one of the foremost in striving to make the workmen of his own neighbourhood something more than "hewers of wood and drawers of water." For more than twenty years he sat as a member of the Committee of the Mechanics' Institute, and for nineteen years, up to the time of his death, held the office of treasurer. When the study of science was unpopular at that institution, he frequently took the whole of the responsibility of instructing the members in electricity and galvanism, and many a recipient of his favours has borne testimony to the value of his instructive and interesting experiments. He was an ardent advocate for the erection of the handsome building in High Street, Stalybridge, and within its walls he spent many happy and profitable hours in company with his much esteemed friend, George Cheetham, whose sudden death in the conversation room created a great impression on his mind. Hundreds of people well remember the time when the cotton panic brought about such extreme destitution in many families, that homes once comfortable were stripped of almost every article of value in order to provide means of subsistence. During the entire period of that disastrous famine, Mr. Burnley was one of the most active members of the Stalybridge Relief Committee, and as a member of the various sub-committees he devoted the bulk of his time to the distribution of relief, and also to the management of the sewing school, held in the Foresters' Hall—a movement which saved scores of girls from demoralisation. In November, 1869, he was returned as one of the representatives of the Dukinfield Ward in the Town Council, and at once set himself to help forward the success of the Public Baths, so liberally presented by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Platt. He generally espoused the Liberal cause in the Council, and was ever a fair spokesman in matters of local interest, and his opinion was generally given under the influence of an independent conviction. In Imperial politics he was not half-hearted; for he was always to be found with the party of advance, advocating the rights and amelioration of the condition of the working classes. The programme, of which he was a strenuous advocate, consisted in undenominational education, household suffrage for the counties, enfranchisement of women, land tenure reform, the abolition of the game laws, imperial economy, equalisation of laws affecting capital and labour, and religious equality. When Nathaniel Buckley, Esq., contested the Borough of Stalybridge in the Liberal interest, Mr. Burnley was one of his most determined supporters. He was most liberal in his aid to the Hob Hill Sunday School from the date of its establishment in 1862, and one of the founders of the Unitarian Church, in Canal Street, Stalybridge; being the first warden elected by the congregation, which office he held to the time of his decease. He was deeply respected in social circles, and looked to by many for sound practical advice.

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### THE OLD INNS OF DUKINFIELD.

THERE are not unfrequently little tracts of local history, sometimes in themselves amusing and often not unimportant in the development of the manners and customs of the age to which they belong.

We have now no longer any Village Chronicler who, on long nights, used to collect around his humble hearth the youngsters of the place to narrate to them the events which tradition handed down from one generation

to another. There is now no "hoary headed sage" to communicate, nor any stripling to listen—all being alike employed in our fabrics. The bell-ringer proclaims the night; the bell-ringer announces the morning, and both night and morning are now equally under the control of the bell-ringer. In this state of things will the pages of the "Noctes" be improperly engrossed or futurity turn away with disdain from "the short and simple annals of the Poor." Let us try the experiment!

Some time previous to 1660 Col. Dukinfield had returned from the army of the Parliament, and with him those of his tenantry who had accompanied him to the warfare, then desolating the country. For one of these "Round-heads," as they were then designated, a license was obtained to enable him to obtain a publichouse, formerly known by the name of the White Flag, a sign the landlord had chosen by which to distinguish it, and it is conjectured he had borne the Colonel's standard of that colour upon some pacific treaty, or his flag of truce during some reconnoitre, the particulars of which he no doubt recited while the "nappy" went round, but the treachery of memory has now unfortunately consigned them to oblivion. In this house Sir Robert Dukinfield held his Court for many years, it being the principal, if not the only inn in the township.

Not far distant from this situation was the Cuckstool-pit, or ducking stool, a punishment sometimes resorted to for the correction of scolds and dissolute women. It has been said that here a tailor's wife, famous for the free use she made of her tongue, and who had provoked her husband beyond endurance, by calling him "a louse" when undergoing this punishment, and actually with her face under the water, held up her hands above its surface, and with her fore-finger and thumb betokened the act of killing a louse!

About the middle of the last century there existed another publichouse on the Hall Green, known by the sign of the Crooked Billet, and then kept by the grandfather of no less a personage than our rubicund sexton. His grandmother, who lately died after having enjoyed life for at least a hundred years, often boasted of the good ale sold at the Crooked Billet, and by way of triumph, said the Royal would always float upon the top of a quart of her ale. Soon after this the landlord of the Crooked Billet unfortunately left his widow with a family of small children to provide for, and her friends deeming it unfitting to bring them up in a house of this description, she quitted it for a more private one; and the Crooked Billet yielded at length, like most other emblems of distinction, to the devouring element of fire.

The next in order of time was a house known by the sign of the Birch, which gave name to the road by which it was situated, leading from Town Lane to Newton Moor, and since called the Birch Lane. The sign was a large birch tree, which grew in front of the house, under which, in hot sunny weather, the traveller might repose on a bench placed for that purpose, and with the sinister design of detaining him to enjoy its comforts, and that of "another pint," ere he started on his journey anew. This was the first house for which a spirit license was obtained, along with the one granted for the purpose of selling ale.

It is somewhat remarkable that all the houses already mentioned are each devoid of a cellar. But, perhaps, that was less necessary, as but a small quantity of malt was then brewed at one time, not amounting to more

than a strike and a half. This when fermented was tunned into large stone bottles, containing about one peck each—the peck consisting of eight quarts; thus managed it would run fresh and foamy to the last.

The Birch was discontinued about eighty years ago, and two rival houses—the Plough and Packhorse then vied with each other for the approbation of the public. The keeper of the Plough was a young widow, buxom withal, and left with only one child. The keeper of the Packhorse was a stout bachelor with thick lips, and one shoulder somewhat higher than the other. It is said rather erroneously that two of a trade can never agree; for the Packhorse walked down to the Plough, and such was the good understanding existing between them that the Plough at length consented to be drawn into matrimony by the Packhorse. It has been sagely as well as poetically remarked that "The course of true love never does run smooth," for discord grew up between these parties; the treaty of marriage was broken off; and the lady sought redress by law, as the gentleman had consoled by taking another to be his wife, who had not before been at the hymeneal altar. The friends of the parties now interfered, and the Plough obtained thirty pounds damages, which, together with the law expenses (no common burthen), were all laid on the back of the Packhorse.

After this the sign of the Plough hung no longer across the middle of the Town Lane causeway, the owner discontinuing her business, left the Packhorse without a competitor—the sole publican of the village. It was here on a Sunday night the clock was stopped, in order to detain the constable of the town at his potations after the hour of ten. It was here the distant chapel-goers retired between the services to partake of broth, beef, and pudding—a Sunday dinner being always provided for the moderate charge of *sixpence* per head for such of the Old Chapel congregation as did not go home to dinner. It was here the Bailiff of the Manor drank his bowl of punch daily till scandal, ever ready to magnify trifles, whispered something to the disparagement of the hostess, after which he was forbidden ever to enter the house. It was here the accounts of the various public officers of the township were audited and allowed—all shots on such occasions being discharged by the public rates of the inhabitants. It was here the Coroner held his inquest, and the liege Lord his Baronial Court. The sign-post projected far from the house, to which it was attached by a transverse beam, neatly squared and moulded on its edges. A horsing block stood at the foot of it, ever ready to accommodate the dismounting customer, especially the worthy dames, who were accustomed to accompany their husbands upon a double horse. This was high change of the village. The butcher came hither on a morning to meet the blacksmith, a spark in whose throat it is said is not to be extinguished. The tailor left his shop board to join in the gossip, and to have his "gill" of warm ale along with the party; only one gill being allowed by the provident hostess in a morning to her best customers. This sign post was equivalent to a market cross in other places; all lost cattle being here cried, and all advertisements here being posted up. But the sign-post has long since disappeared, and with it the true character and distinction of the village departed for ever.

As to the rest the catalogue is soon enumerated. About fifty years ago the Astley Arms Inn was erected, but for twenty years of the former part of that period it was known by the name of the White Horse. The landlord of

the Packhorse took a lease of this inn after its first keeper left it, and merging the licenses of both houses into one it continued for many years, the only publichouse in the place.

Some twenty-four years ago the Old General was erected. After this the number kept increasing with the quick growth of the population. Hence we have now an additional quantity. The Buck, the Hare and Hounds, the Feathers, the Furnace, and the Limekiln; no one of which can be said to belong to the past, and all too unimportant for the present history.

If, as a great moralist has truly said that a Tavern Chair is the throne of human felicity, surely the memory of those houses which have contributed so largely to the enjoyment of generations long since passed away, ought to be preserved.

WILLIAM HAMPSON.

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**LICENSE OF REV. JOHN ANGIER'S HOUSE.**—Charles, by the grace of God, King of England, France and England, Defenders of the faith, &c. To all Mayors, Bailiffs, Constables, and others our Officers, Ministers, Civil and Military, whom it may concern. Greeting.—In pursuance of our Declaration of the 15th of March, 167 $\frac{1}{2}$ , we have allowed and we hereby do allow of a room or rooms in the house of John Angier, of Manchester Parish; in Lancashire, to be a place for the use of such as do not conform to the Church of England, who are of the persuasion commonly called Presbyterian, to meet and assemble in order to their public worship and devotion. And all and singular our Officers and Ministers, Ecclesiastical, Civil, and Military, whom it may concern, are to take due notice hereof. And they and every of them, are hereby strictly charged and required to hinder any tumult or disturbance, and to protect them in their said meetings and assemblies. Given at our Court, at Whitehall, the 30th day of September, in the 24th year of our Reign, 1672.—By His Majesty's Command.





## ERRATA.

- Page 1, Note, for *Palatti* read *Palatii*.  
,, 1, Note, for *Praefactus* read *Praefectus*.  
,, 9, line 12, for *r* read *or*.  
,, 12, Note, for *become* read *became*.  
,, 14, for *Sentantii* read *Setantii*.  
,, 24, Note, for *Agricola* read *Agricolæ*.  
,, 26, Note, for *some* read *seven*.  
,, 26, Note, for *enver* read *more*.  
,, 28, line 16, for *of England* read *of the English*.  
,, 37, for *determinate* read *determined*.  
,, 40, top of page, *Specimen from Domesday Book*.  
,, 41, under Arms read *Roger de Poictou*.  
,, 54, for *wass* *ucceded* read *was* *succeeded*.  
,, 105, for *slighest* read *slightest*.  
,, 123, for *Bentinct* read *Bentinck*.  
,, 128, for *Bentinct* read *Bentinck*.  
,, 128, at bottom, for *Henry* read *Harry*.  
,, 131, for *accomodation* read *accommodation*.  
,, 141, line 11, for *from* read *with*.  
,, 148, line 2, for *ee* read *fee*.  
,, 162, line 11, for *charity* read *Chantry*.  
,, 191, line 25, for *Sunday* read *Saturday*.  
,, 268, last line, for *not* read *hardly*.  
,, 278, line 17, for *which* read *whom*.  
,, 317, line 7, for *nothwithstanding* read *notwithstanding*.  
,, 344, for *XIII.* read *XIV.*
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## NOTES, &c., LOCAL AND HISTORICAL.

- Page 1, line 10, for *appellation* read *appellation*.  
,, 4, line 6, from bottom for *1680* read *1689*.  
,, 6, line 1, for *massy* read *mossy*.  
,, 6, line 26, for *accross* read *across*.  
,, 8, line 6, for *oue* read *one*.  
,, 20, line 27, for *ccuntry* read *Country*.  
,, 32, at end of article, should be *H*.













